The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Gerald Kennedy:

CONGREGATIONAL ETHICS

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VOL. XXII, NO. 2 FEBRUARY, 1951

By Gerald Kennedy

CONGREGATIONS NEED

EVERY profession has been concerned with the ethics of its members, and rightly so. One bad member can bring disrespect to the group, and men want people to honor them, not only for themselves but for their work. The ministry has been no exception, and you can hardly have a conference of ministers without subtle points of right behavior being raised. No one would claim that preachers or any other group keep the codes perfectly. Most of us would agree, however, that it is a good thing to have the principles of right behavior ever before us.

Now it has come to me that there is a place for a code of ethics for those who are served by the professions. I should like to hear a doctor, for example, tell how a patient ought to behave, or a lawyer describe what he expects of a client. But these men must speak for themselves. I take the liberty of speaking a word concerning the behavior of the congregation, trusting that I speak the truth in love.

Children in the Service

This subject has to be approached with great caution, for parents will not be pleased to hear one word of adverse criticism regarding their offspring. Not only that; many a person thinks that, if parents are willing to bring their children to church, it ought not to matter how they behave. I approach this subject, therefore, in the mood of a Daniel entering the lion's den.

I finished preaching one morning, utterly exhausted and frustrated because a noisy baby had made it impossible for me to establish any relationship with the congregation, and my words had been like pebbles thrown against a window. The mother came up to me, smiling sweetly, and said, "I'm glad you can outshout a baby." I wanted to say that preaching is a little more than outshouting a baby, and if that were the criterion, an auctioneer or a professional hog-caller was the man for her.

I have been in worship services where small children were allowed to walk around through the church. One Sunday morning two little girls did so much dashing around that I asked the minister who the little rascals were. When he replied that they were his, I murmured feebly, "Aren't they cute!" Did you ever come to the point in the sermon where the verdict is to be reached, if ever, and the whole thing ended in a fiasco because of an outcry from restless infants?

Nursery Facilities Needed

Churches ought to provide nursery facilities for parents, and then parents should be encouraged to bring their children into the church service just as soon as they are able to sit for an hour with reasonable quietness. But parents ought to realize that they have obligations to the other members of the congregation, and a noisy child can make worship impossible and send the preacher to an early grave. At the movies, I am told, the usher will invite parents with crying babies to leave. I never attended a concert that would tolerate the kind of behavior it has been my misfortune to experience in the Lord's sanctuaries.

That the church should be a center for children, I agree. That the church must become more a family-centered fellowship, is my conviction. That a man who does not like children will make a poor minister, seems to me undebatable. That our children should be brought to church as soon as possible, I have always proclaimed. But that a child either too young or too undisciplined to stay in one place and behave ought to be allowed to disturb everybody else in the church, I emphatically deny. There ought to be some way to make it plain that such conduct is not only discourteous, but highly unethical.

Participation

I was invited to a friend's home one evening along with a dozen other people. I remember one fellow who evidently assumed that, while he had to be in the group for a couple of hours, he certainly would not be a part of the group. His face never lighted up the whole evening, and there was not the slightest indication of any interest in any

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GERALD KENNEDY happens to be a bishop. That is not the reason he was elected an editorial associate of The Pulpit. In fact, the members of the Christian Century Foundation had decided to select only pastors as editorial helpers for this journal. But when the name of Methodist Bishop Kennedy was suggested, it was immediately agreed that an exception was necessary if our list was to include the great preachers of America. Bishop Kennedy is also well known as an author. He is resident bishop of the Portland, Oregon area.

Will the roof cave in
where you go to church?
How to behave in church?

Protestants need to do something about the confusion, the coldness, the noise in worship services

A CODE OF ETHICS, TOO

of the conversation. His bored attitude made it doubly difficult to keep things going, because such a spirit is infectious. It would have been much better if he had gone quietly into the next room and played solitaire.

Now the sad truth is that there are numbers of people who come to church with that same spirit. They never participate in the service. Granted that some people cannot sing too well, or perhaps even do not like to sing; but at the very least, they can hold up one side of a hymnal. There are people who seem to make it a point to indicate no interest in the hymns and adamantly refuse to accept the slightest responsibility for them.

When the responsive reading is announced, these people gaze around the sanctuary. During the pastoral prayer their eyes do not close and they seem to take a pagan delight in sitting with unbowed heads and open eyes. Even the Lord's Prayer never catches them joining in, and when the choir sings the anthem they ostentatiously read the bulletin or thumb the hymnal.

Preacher's *Bete Noir*

These people are the preacher's *bête noir*. Most of us who preach learn to be grateful—but not overly so—when people are pleased with our sermons; most of us are not too upset when certain people are not pleased with our sermons. But what can be done for those who never indicate in any way that they are either pleased or displeased? The man I dread to face more than any other is the man who seems to be saying, "Try and get a response out of me! I'm present, but only as an observer." It goes without saying, of course, that such a man would rather die than greet a stranger or speak a word of Christian greeting to an acquaintance at the close of the service.

Is it too much to ask that people who attend church should also participate in the service? Is this anything more than common courtesy? Leaving aside for the moment the whole matter of getting out of worship what we put into it, does not a man owe to his neighbors his participation in their common enterprise? I have purposely put this matter on the lowest possible level—the level of ethical behavior. A much stronger case might be made for the individual's spiritual obligation to his brethren.

I was having dinner with some friends one Sunday, when one of the leading laymen of the church said: "I told my wife the other day that the minister had written a little note to her in the bulletin. When she asked what it was, I pointed to the sentence at the top of the page: 'Let the first note of the organ be a call to quietness and worship.' " His wife did not seem to think it was very funny.

Good Manners Needed

The person who breaks into every conversation is soon left out of most groups, or at best is tolerated reluctantly. The bore can usually be isolated, or at least one soon learns how to keep from being cornered by him. But at church, there is not much that can be done. The individual who wants to gossip during the opening part of the worship service begins to talk to whoever may be in the next pew, and most people are too polite to tell him to keep still. Such people never understand the word in the bulletin asking for silence, and they never understand that the minister is talking to them when he preaches now and again on the importance of silence in worship. But to break in on another's meditation is certainly as rude as interrupting a conversation.

Such things as tapping on the seat in front of you, chewing gum noisily or even quietly, taking an outside seat and forcing people to stumble over you, leaning across your neighbor to say something to the person beyond—these things are not confined to congregations. But it would be worth a great deal if a congregation could be a demonstration of more courtesy and more consideration than is to be found in any other gathering.

What Can Be Done?

Most churches have too many committees already, but if there is none adequate to deal with these matters, I would appoint a new one. Let it give its attention to ways and means of bringing these matters to the congregation. Suggestions can come from laymen which would be deeply resented if they came from the minister. Perhaps a small booklet on congregational ethics might be prepared for all the members of the church. This would seem to me a legitimate part of training for church membership. So far as noise and disturbance in the service are concerned, a well trained group of ushers could deal with these tactfully and firmly. But for the sake of our spiritual life, let us do something about the confusion, the coldness, the noise in what we Protestants often inappropriately refer to as worship services.

By Harold A. Bosley

Christ Limited Is Christ Betrayed

THIS declaration, "Christ limited is Christ betrayed," I found in the pages of a contemporary magazine, but its truth is as old as the Christian faith itself. It is not an abstract, theological proposition over which there may be endless debate. It is a concrete, ethical discovery about which there can be no doubt. "Christ limited is Christ betrayed" is a discovery made not once but repeatedly, not just in the first century by a few men but in every succeeding century by an increasing number of men who call themselves Christian. It is a discovery made neither in a study nor in a cloister, but in the thick of daily living and in the face of the ordinary as well as the tragic problems of life. And it is a discovery which we need to make today because we live in a time when cheap substitutes for vital religion may be bought at any price on any bargain counter. This discovery is so significant that it deserves to be stated a number of ways lest we miss its supreme importance for living:

If your religious faith is going to mean anything to you, it must mean everything to you.

If you try to limit religion to a part of your life, you will lose it throughout the whole of your life.

You do not get a vital religious faith as you collect a room of antiques—piece by piece; it is a living unit that you either get all at once or you do not get at all. To be sure, it may be as immature as an embryo when you get it and be in need of careful nurture before it achieves its full powers, but even an embryo is a living unit or it has no future as a part of life.

You cannot buy a vital religious faith on the margin—on the margin of your time or possessions or life; you either lay everything you have on the line, or you waste what you do put there.

You cannot win a vital religious faith by means of a calculating and cautious and prudential approach; you fall in love without reservation, or you lose it altogether.

Editorial Associate HAROLD A. BOSLEY has long since been recognized as one of America's great preachers. The Pulpit's editors were so impressed by this sermon that it has been chosen as our special lenten message to the preachers of America. The amount of space given it is almost unprecedented in this journal's history. Dr. Bosley is pastor of First Methodist, Evanston, Ill.

In only a very limited sense is it true that in religion you get out of it what you put into it. In simple fact, you must put everything into it in order to get anything out of it; if you put anything less than everything into it, you get nothing out of it but the shame of hypocrisy, a sense of frustration, and an experience of profound disillusionment.

I am not telling you anything new when I say that this sort of presentation of the character and the claims of great religion has had a rough time of it in the modern world—until almost yesterday. We simply do not want to pay that kind of price for religion. By and large, we want to pick it up at some cut-rate price. For until almost yesterday, we were sure we could work out our own salvation but without fear and without trembling. Now, as a result of the terrible hammering of the last thirty years, we are so afflicted by fear and trembling that we have about lost faith in our ability to do anything about our own salvation.

Our Spiritual Plight

You can, if you desire, put our spiritual plight in a single cutting sentence: We are citizens of an age which is rapidly writing its obituary in terms of evasions rather than affirmations, in terms of compromises rather than convictions. It is to us, therefore, that the Christian faith turns with its word of sharp warning yet of strong hope: You must come to terms with God! It is his way or your way—and between them you must choose. There is no compromise! It is all or none. It is all his way or none his way. You choose to travel the whole of his way, or you do not even make a beginning. This all-or-none character of the Christian challenge has always awakened criticism and protest. I have heard it called many things, the milder epithets being "sheer bigotry," "stark prejudice," "blatant dogmatism."

But, as a matter of fact, it is none of these. It is simply the logical conclusion to the teachings of Jesus Christ and to his insight into the nature of the will of God for human life. The only way to alter that conclusion is to remove Jesus Christ as the historic revelation of God. Then and then only can we remove or modify the all-or-none character of the Christian challenge. But keep Jesus Christ and we keep the challenge. Although we have manifested considerable ingenuity in the arts of evasion in the Christian tradition, I do not

know of anyone who thinks he can remove Jesus Christ and keep even the semblance of Christianity in our religious faith.

This severe choice between God's will and our will was never more uncompromisingly stated than in the New Testament itself. Jesus himself gives us our clearest statement of it. He had the temerity to look at the enormous portfolio of law which had grown up during the thirteen hundred years of religious experience of his people and agree that it could be summed up in two simple propositions: Love God utterly, Love your neighbor utterly. He challenged men with the highest and hardest choices imaginable. Wherever his hearers turned, they encountered that insistent word: choose, choose, choose. There are, he said, two ways which a man can follow, one which leads to life and the other which leads to destruction, and between them man must choose. It was he who said that no man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God. It was he who set no limit on the service that God might expect of those who believed in him. For Jesus, God's will is unlimited and any man who claims to follow the will of God is assuming an unlimited responsibility. That is why in his concluding appeal to his disciples he instructed them to "make disciples of all nations . . . and, lo, I am with you always."

Christ Fits No Patterns

On the basis of hard-won experience, we stand up to confess what we and our fathers before us have discovered—that we cannot limit Christ to our life as it is, that we cannot make him fit into the inherited and accepted patterns of life. We can try, to be sure, and we will fail. But we will do more than merely fail to limit him; we will both betray him in the effort and lose him in the end.

The Christians in New Testament times found this out. They, too, tried to make Christ fit into the pattern of their conventions, prejudices and traditions. The earliest disciples were Jews; they believed Jesus to be the long-expected Messiah of the Jewish faith. It is understandable that they should have felt that all who wanted to be his followers should, as a first step, become Jews. They said, in effect: "You can enter the Christian faith only through the doorway of Judaism." This edict, more felt than expressed for a long time, kept many an earnest Gentile outside the Christian fellowship.

But finally it was abandoned. Why? Because a good Jewish-Christian named Paul was literally overwhelmed by a vision of the greatness of Christ. His letter to the Ephesians is studded with superlatives about the "immeasurable greatness," the "immeasurable riches," the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Caught up by this vision, Paul saw in a flash that he could not limit Christ to the confines of his ancestral faith, Judaism, without betraying him. In the strength of his discovery, he called upon Christians to accept the simple fact that "in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ."

Thus ended the first recorded effort to limit the meaning of Christ to an inherited religious tradition, to cut him down to our size, so to speak. But the principle of that effort is far from ended—as we well know! For we are hard at it today.

Not Just Personal Savior

Some of us want to regard him simply as a personal savior, to limit him to our private problems and living, to keep his searching ethical insights from lighting up the dark corners of our social conventions, customs and policies. But there are others who want to regard him solely as a leader in social reform, intent upon upsetting the status quo. They regard his teachings about prayer, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation as unimportant and brush them off as so much religious trapping.

Those who want to limit him to purely personal problems need to be reminded of the English nobleman who came away from a sermon on the evils of divorce, objecting, "What's religion coming to when it invades a man's personal affairs?" Those who want to limit him to social issues would do well to recall the indignant exclamation of a famous American statistician a few years ago as he read the social creed of his church: "Religion has nothing to do with social problems." There's a dilemma for you! Some warn us away from personal problems, others warn us away from social problems. Neither group seems to realize that it is asking the impossible.

Actually, as Jesus pointed out a long time ago, there is an indivisible unity between the personal and social meanings of religion. Try to separate them and something vital is severed, and both wither away and die. The love of God and the love of man are two sides of the same coin for Jesus. You may concentrate upon one all you want to, but the other is always there, and no less real and relevant because you choose to ignore it. To alter the figure of speech, love of God and love of man are like the opposite ends of the same tunnel. Go in one and keep on going and you come out the other. You may have heard of the interchange between Cardinal Manning, the English prelate, and Henry George, the great single tax advocate from the United States. Cardinal Manning, a devout churchman and stalwart champion of the rights of oppressed peoples, said to George: "My faith begins with the love of God, but as I pursue it I find myself loving man." Henry George replied: "And I begin by loving man and end by loving God."

Try limiting the meaning of Christ to one or the

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other and you lose him from both. Christ limited is Christ betrayed.

To Limit Is to Lose

On still another score we have learned to our sorrow that we cannot limit Christ without losing him. We have tried mightily to limit him to our creedal statements about him. We have had many creeds in Christian history—and the end is not yet! From the very beginning of our faith we have sought to put it in satisfactory intellectual and verbal pattern. Peter, wittingly or unwittingly, formed the first creed when he said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Under the danger of Roman persecution another creed—an even shorter one—took form: "Jesus is Lord," and it became the verbal door through which men entered the Christian fellowship. Later, in answer to the many questions raised by the inquiring minds of Greece and Rome, these early and simple creeds were enlarged to the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. Yet it is an eloquent fact that no one creedal form has been able to satisfy all Christians. Some have secured wider acceptance than others, to be sure. The Apostles' Creed is probably the best known and the most widely used one in Christendom today. But, in our time, other creeds are coming to the fore. In the back of our Methodist hymnals we exhibit a fine impartiality by listing three affirmations of faith and you cannot read any one of them without sensing congruence with and fitness in the Christian tradition of faith.

Creeds, correctly understood and properly used, are of irreplaceable value. They deserve to be treated with understanding and respect—with understanding because they are efforts to state clearly men's faith in the realities of religion, with respect because any and all can be enormously useful in helping us understand our own heritage and throw light on the problems we face today.

Danger in Creeds

But there is a danger in creeds. It is so easy to exaggerate their importance. They so quickly become ends in themselves in our thinking and living. It is particularly easy for them to become the central facts in worship. Time after time the creed-makers have held aloft some particular formulation crying: "Now we have it the way it ought to be! This is the final truth!" Believing this, they require that all men give consent to their formulation. Some of the wretchedest pages in Christian history have been written by sincere, zealous creed-makers who wanted to get everyone in step with their great statements of faith.

Important as it is to have creeds, they must not become all-important. Valuable as they are, they are not invaluable. Necessary as they are, no one of them is irreplaceable. A Christian creed is a finger pointing at a fact—and that fact is Jesus Christ. The purpose of a creed is to lead men to Christ, not to the creed itself. Christ is bigger than all our creeds. No one of them can do justice to his glory, to the "unsearchable riches" of which Paul speaks. Pick out the most inclusive, the most hallowed creed you know and, while it may most usefully point men toward Christ, it is not Christ. It is a symbol of a fact; he is that fact. Its light is borrowed light; he is the source of the light. Whatever meaning a creed has is but a fragment of the total meaning which God is pouring into the world through the life of Jesus Christ. Try limiting him to a creed and the very creedal pattern which you exalt will explode in your face, being utterly unable to contain the power of God in his life.

Recently a distinguished professor from the Eastern Orthodox Church, Dr. Georges Florovsky, was lecturing at the Duke Divinity School. We were prepared to follow him through the intricacies of theological thought, yet this is the way he began: "Our faith begins in a personal experience with Jesus Christ. That is the first and the most important fact about it. The fact gives meaning to all our patterns of thought and creeds. It is the one truly basic fact in our faith."

Count Leo Tolstoy would agree. Describing the reason for the influence of Jesus Christ upon him, he brushes aside the Christologies of the Church, saying: ". . . but the light itself is of importance to me, that it still shines upon me after eighteen hundred years with undimmed brightness; but how to call it, or of what it consists, or who gave it existence, is immaterial to me."

God's Goal

You may have heard of an incident which is reported to have occurred in the life of one of the churches in the East more than a generation ago. This church had a creedal statement which committed it to believe in the doctrine of infant damnation which, to put it in a sentence, is simply that if an infant dies before it is baptized it goes to hell. Needless to say, the ethical conscience of many members of that church were restless over this arbitrary statement and finally they plucked up enough courage to seek its change. After years of effort they succeeded in having it brought to the floor of the annual meeting of the church for a vote and by a very narrow margin it was determined that the church no longer held to that belief. It was with an air of relief that those present realized that they had decided that an infant who died without having had the rite of baptism did not go to hell. A weary layman got to his feet and said: "Mr. Chairman, I move you we make this retroactive." The very idea that the God of the universe is teetering around from heel to toe while we make up our mind about the minutiae in our creeds is one of those incredible delusions born of human pride. The God of the universe is driving straight on toward his goal, hoping that we will be the ones through whom he works and seeking to work through us, but not being permanently delayed by our defections.

Christ limited to our creeds is Christ betrayed by our creeds. We cannot limit him to any one creed without losing the richness and power of his spirit throughout the whole range of our corporate life. Once we have this warning firmly instilled in

our mind and conscience, we will be able to use our creedal statements with wisdom, justice and freedom.

No Corner on Christ

Sometimes I wonder whether we ever will face honestly the fact that the same thing is true in the relationship between Christ and the churches that bear his name. Of the hundreds of churches and cults that have claimed the name "Christian" over the two thousand years of Christian history, I do not know of a single one that does not somehow convey the distinct impression that it has a corner on Christ. Most grant, of course, and some more readily than others, that other churches may not be wholly wrong in their interpretation, but even this is a reluctant admission. The Roman Catholic Church boldly and blatantly announces that it is the one true church, and it is either so confident of or so fearful of the claim that it will not even discuss the possibility that it might be wrong. The indefensible arrogance with which this historically preposterous claim is advanced opens up so wide a chasm of misunderstanding in the Christian tradition that, to date, it has been impossible to bridge it.

Yet the difficulty is less only in degree between and among so many of the non-Roman Catholic churches. Trying to put our disunity in its best possible light, we sometimes say that the various churches are parallel paths toward the same goal. In a limited sense this may be true. But, historically speaking, we have not so judged or dealt with each other. We have been rivals for the time, the attention and the loyalty of people in our respective communities. As a direct result we have overchurched practically every urban community in the United States of America. It is difficult to go through any of our towns and villages, let alone our larger cities, without seeing a whole host of struggling Protestant churches trying to support themselves in various sections of the community. I think particularly of one small town in Maryland which has and is trying to support three separate Protestant churches on three separate corners of the main street of the village. Any one of the three would be adequate to the spiritual needs of the community. Yet they continue to persist in the belief that they are "parallel paths toward the same goal." If that be true, then they are parallel paths toward the goal of decreasing usefulness and increasing disunion in the spiritual life of that community.

Conserving 'Values'

Trying as we are to formulate an enduring structure for the World Council of Churches, it is not uncommon to hear devout churchmen express concern lest the "values" of their denominational traditions be lost in the increasing communion of the World Council. This, in one sense, is a legitimate concern, but, actually, it rests upon an almost complete lack of confidence in the vision and justice of fellow Christians. Why, for example, would a Presbyterian want to lose the hard-earned values of the Methodist tradition, or vice versa? There is something encouraging about the fact that the differences between us now are more institutional than creedal and theological in nature. This does not mean that we can afford to take these differences lightly. The things that separate us actually separate us until we learn how to work with them in so creative a manner that they are bonds instead of barriers toward our actual communion with each other.

There is no greater task confronting Christendom today than the bridging of these chasms which have opened up for one reason or another in our common life, and which weaken our common witness. We must stand together, work together, pray together and think together if we are to lead this world toward the essential unity which it must find or perish. We cannot limit Christ to our churches. Our separateness is a sin, and we must never lose sight of that fact. The smugness and complacency with which we accept our denominationalism and exalt our denominational loyalties and programs is a judgment of the inadequacy of the church itself. One thing is sure, the coming great church will rise above our differences or we will lose our Christ. Do you think it possible that we as churchmen, as people who gladly gather here today and cry with men of old: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord!"—do you think it even remotely possible, I ask, for us to have a rebirth of humility about our differences with each other and say with Marian John Bradshaw: "There is no Christology adequate to portray [Christ]. There is no age which exhausts his meaning. There is no class which controls his influence. There is no institution which monopolizes his power. There is no portrait of the Lord Jesus which is final."

Christ Unlimited

It was Stanley Jones who said: "When the world is at its worst, the Christian must be at his best." This was never truer than today. More than we like to think, the happy outcome of these calamitous times depends upon the number of people who are willing to take David Livingstone's pledge: "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the Kingdom of Christ. If anything I have will advance that Kingdom, it shall be given or kept as by giving or keeping it I shall best promote the glory of him to whom I owe all my hopes both for time and eternity." When we are prepared to make that pledge and let it become the guiding star of our life, then we are prepared to serve the unlimited and limitless Christ in whom this world can find salvation.

Many of you have read a book which I have read and reread many times and never failed to commend to others for careful attention: C. S. Lewis' famous *Screwtape Letters*. You may recall the general plot of the book. It purports to be a series of letters written by Screwtape, an undersecretary in hell, to one of his minions on earth who is charged with the task of supervising a certain

client or patient until he arrives safely in hell at the end of his earthly life. Each time the demonic missionary gets in trouble he writes the underworld for advice, and the book is a collection of the letters of advice sent him. Upon one occasion the earthly demon is in trouble because his client has joined a church. "Now what do we do?" he wants to know. Screwtape answers that the matter is not as serious as it might seem. He counsels his emissary on earth to be sure to keep with his patient at all times, especially in church. When in church keep close to him and "keep him aware of the little things." Keep him aware of the fact that this usher is a hypocrite, that this man's shoes squeak, that this lady's hat does not fit properly. Keep him aware of the little things and never, never "let him see the church with her banners flying, for that is the sight at which all hell trembles."

"With her banners flying"—that happens to be our big business these days as Christian churchmen. To keep the banners flying on the great issues confronting mankind. To see to it that the Christian word is spoken, and spoken with force, persuasiveness and effectiveness, in the councils of the races, the classes and the nations of the earth. To see to it that wherever tensions and conflicts are threatening to break up the family of God, the Christian word is spoken. To see to it that the Christian witness is borne to the uttermost parts of the earth, beginning with our hearts. To see to it that wherever men grope in darkness they are pointed toward the light we find in Christ's life. To see to it that wherever men are crippled by despair they are pointed toward the hope and encouragement that can be found in him as in no one else.

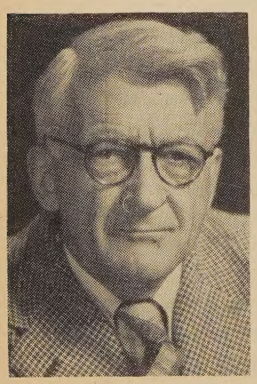
Christ limited is Christ betrayed—this is tragically true. And it is gloriously true that Christ unlimited is Christ fulfilled and in that fulfillment men find salvation. He is the Lord of life—not just this piece or that fragment of life, but the whole of it. So to see him, so to believe in him, so to worship him, so to present him to the world in which we live—this is the Christian gospel and the Christian mission.

The Spiritual Freedom of Discipleship

By George H. Scherer

If ye abide in my word, then you are my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. John 8:31.

ONCE a fire was raging in the business section of a small town, but the firemen were making no attempt to put it out; instead, they were quarreling among themselves. In former years all the water hose they used had been green in color, but recently some new hose of a red color had been purchased, and the firemen were arguing about the use of the red hose. Some insisted that only the green hose be used, for they had used it for a long time and had never known it to fail; others said, "Use the old green hose if you wish, but let us try the new red hose." While they argued, the building burned down. Foolish firemen! They forgot that it was not the hose that put out the fire, but the water which flowed through it.



GEORGE H. SCHERER is a member of the American Presbyterian Mission in Beirut, Lebanon. For 25 years he has been general secretary of the Bible Lands Union for Christian Education. He is professor of biblical literature in the Near East School of Theology and lecturer in religion in the Beirut College for Women. Formerly he was pastor of Beirut's Anglo-American Church.

Now you recognize at once that this is not a true story, for men are not usually so foolish where the salvation of property is concerned. It is only when the salvation of souls is involved that men believe that the color of the hose is important, or that it is the hose, and not the water of life which flows through it, which puts out the fire of sin in the human heart.

An Old Attitude

This attitude in Christianity is not recent or modern. It is in fact as old as Christianity, and showed itself first among the twelve disciples whom Jesus chose "to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the good news, and to have authority to cast out demons." Perhaps it was the very fact of being chosen by him to be members of an inner circle that made them certain that their green hose must be used by everybody else as well as themselves.

You remember the incident. Jesus and the twelve were returning from Caesarea Philippi. When they reached Capernaum, Jesus asked them what they had been discussing along the way; but they kept silent, for they had been arguing about which of them was greatest. Jesus demonstrated the nature of greatness by taking a child in his arms and saying, "Unless you turn and become like little children you shall not even enter the kingdom; and the one who is as humble as this

child, he is the greatest." John didn't enjoy being rebuked, so he interrupted Jesus to tell about something for which he thought they deserved praise. "Teacher," he said, "we saw a man casting out demons in your name, and we forbade him because he was not following us." You see, he wasn't using their green hose! True, the water of life was flowing through it, for he was casting out devils and doing it in the name of Jesus. But he wasn't one of the Twelve, so *they* forbade him. But Jesus said, "Forbid him not, for no man who does a mighty work in my name will be able to speak evil of me very soon. Everyone who is not against us is for us." And in so saying, Jesus drew the thoughts of the Twelve away from the question of this man's relation to themselves, and lifted them to that of his, and their, loyalty to himself. The man didn't belong to the inner circle, but he did belong to Jesus.

Characteristics of Discipleship

What are the characteristics of discipleship? Are they not two? First—to use a word coined by another—followship; and second, fellowship. The disciple of Jesus is one who follows him and only him; and the disciple of Jesus is one who maintains fellowship with all others who likewise follow him.

Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee by calling individuals to follow him. And he continued throughout his ministry to call men to follow him —22 times it is so recorded in the Gospels. When the time came that men must be trained to carry on the work he was doing, he chose twelve disciples to be with him, and to proclaim the good news, and to cast out demons. In his school of discipleship, students were getting both knowledge and experience, and they were facing examinations. Peter, one of the first to be called, failed in one of his more important examinations and even denied that he was a disciple. But Jesus forgave him, and later gave him the opportunity to take his final comprehensive examination, on the shores of the sea of Galilee where he had first begun his discipleship. And there again he nearly failed, for he began to ask about the position and work of another disciple, "Lord, what shall this man do?" instead of thinking of his own privileges and responsibilities. And Jesus replied, "What is that to you? Follow me!" The instructions at the beginning and the final instructions were the same—follow me.

Qualifying for Leadership

There is another word concerning which we hear much today, more in fact than we hear about followship or fellowship. We hear it in all walks of life, more especially perhaps in civic affairs and in the churches—the need for leadership. In national and international affairs peoples are complaining about the weakness of their leaders; in the churches much is written and said about leadership. Committees are called to plan for leadership training courses, and summer conferences are arranged to train young men and women for leadership.

Two things perhaps need to be said. First, Jesus spoke of leadership only once, and then to condemn the desire of disciples to attain it; for he said, "Do not be called leaders, for one is your leader, even the Christ . . . and you are all brothers." Second, those who seek leadership are seldom worthy of it, and those who are worthy of it seldom seek it.

The story is told—this time a true story—of an American girl who went to Japan as a foreign missionary. When she reached her station, she discovered that her bishop under whom she was to serve was a Japanese, and she returned home to America. She explained her action by saying, "I went out to Japan to help the Japanese, not to serve under them." In other words, she wanted to be a leader among the Japanese, and not their servant nor yet their fellow worker. An unusual case, it is true, but one which illustrates the dangers of too much emphasis on leadership. In the Kingdom of God there is only one form of leadership, the leadership of service, and he is the best leader who serves best. Perhaps if in our churches we spoke more of followship and fellowship, and said less about leadership, the problem would solve itself, for close followship and deep fellowship inevitably produce vital leadership.

But the Twelve were not called to follow Jesus separately or in isolation. As they followed him they were not to draw away from others who were also following, but rather to draw nearer to them. Following him was to create a unity among them. Followship was to create fellowship.

Not Synonymous Terms

Let me remind you of one fact which we all know, but which we sometimes forget or ignore, namely, that the terms "the fellowship" and "the church" are not synonymous. They do not describe identical groups of people, for each group includes some persons who are not included in the other. That is why we sometimes hear a teacher in a mission school say of a student, "He (or she) is not a Christian"—meaning usually that he has not been baptized—"but he is certainly a follower of Christ." Not a member of the church but a member of the fellowship! And when we look at the church, we see that many in the church are not in the fellowship. There are political "Christians" and nominal "Christians"; and there are three great branches, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant, not in full fellowship with each other.

Even among Protestants there is no universal fellowship. There were two gatherings of Christians in Amsterdam in 1948. The second, the World Council of Churches, was inclusive in its purpose, seeking to bring the largest possible number of Christian groups into a visible ecumenical union. But that had been preceded by another gathering of certain Protestant groups which was

exclusive in its purpose, seeking to bring into union only those groups which adhered to a particular fundamentalist interpretation of Christian truth.

There is a further fact we should remember, namely, that the fellowship precedes the church, not the church the fellowship. During his life on earth, loyalty to Jesus the Christ created the fellowship; the church came into being after his death. Moreover, it is not Christ who calls the church his body, his bride, but the church which calls itself so. Jesus called his disciples "friends of the bridegroom," but it seems sometimes that "churchmen" consider themselves bridesmaids and that they are primarily concerned with bridal finery. Jesus' final commission to his disciples was this: "Go into all the world, and make *disciples* of all the peoples, teaching them to observe all that *I* have commanded *you;* and lo, *I* am with you always, to the close of the age." Discipleship rather than leadership, fellowship rather than churchmanship.

The Law of Discipleship

"If you continue in my word, then you are my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free"? Here are words of Jesus containing a clause expressing a condition and a clause expressing a result. The result clause is one of the best known and most frequently quoted sayings of Jesus—"You will know the truth and the truth will make you free." A missionary college in the Near East has these words carved in stone over the entrance into its recitation hall. Secular scientists quote these words to support their search for knowledge, interpreting them to mean, "Knowledge creates freedom." And almost always the first part of the sentence is entirely forgotten, or at least ignored—"*If* you abide in *my* words, then are you *my disciples,* and . . ."

But Jesus was not speaking to secular scientists who were investigating the laws of the natural world, nor to young men and women of indifferent religion who were seeking an education. He was speaking to the Jews who believed in him, but in the presence of Jews who refused to believe. He was stating a law of the spiritual life of discipleship. He was saying that those to whom he had said "Follow me" were to prove the reality of their followship by the depth and sincerity of their fellowship. The Jews who did not believe were the slaves of their theological creeds, their ecclesiastical prejudices, their ceremonial isolationism. And he was saying that those who abide in his word were truly his disciples, and that they would know the truth which would free them from everything that enslaved them and made them intellectually narrow and spiritually proud.

In the light of these words, let us return to the incident which we first considered. The Twelve, conscious of the fact that they were the chosen inner circle among the disciples, were arguing as to which of them within the circle was the greatest. They were all leaders, but who among them was the greatest? When Jesus condemned their attitude, John tried to create a diversion by telling of how they had forbidden a fellow disciple to cast out demons in the name of Christ, because he didn't belong to their group. They were not abiding in his word; they were forgetting that the double mark of discipleship is loyalty to the one who called them to follow him, and fellowship with all who like them were responding to that call. They were still enslaved; they were carrying over into their new life the prejudices of their former life, the prejudices of the Jews who did not believe in him. He had condemned Pharisaism among the Jews; he would not tolerate Pharisaism among his disciples.

Still Valid Today

And Jesus speaks today to us who believe, with this same word: "If you abide in my word, then you are my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." Today as then, any attempt by any person or group or church to assert in word or deed that they alone possess the truth, any attempt to require others to follow them any erection of standards which exclude other disciples from fellowship, especially from the Lord's Supper which we are told to eat "in memory of him," is a repudiation of this principle of the spiritual freedom of discipleship. The spiritually free disciple cannot but recognize the freedom of his fellow disciple.

Unfortunately, down through the ages and today, disciples have frequently forgotten the lessons of this incident, this principle of the spiritual freedom of discipleship. Disciples, Christian workers, today erect barriers around themselves as did the Twelve, barriers of theological rigidity, ecclesiastical snobbery, sacramental exclusiveness. They would forbid those who do not conform to their own interpretation of truth from casting out demons in the name of Christ. They

> make his love too narrow
> By false limits of their own,
> And magnify his strictness
> With a zeal he will not own.

Christians must seek always to accept and follow this word of the Christ. No creed is the single expression of the truth for which Christ sets his disciples free; no doctrine of the church is the single interpretation of the mind of Christ; no barrier should exclude any disciple from the fellowship of the Lord's table. As we go forth into the active work of making disciples of all nations, we should be imbued with this same attitude and spirit. We must seek to learn together how we may follow him closest, how we may share in fellowship the deepest, that thus we may learn the truth that shall set us free. It is not the color of the hose that matters, whether blue or red or green or yellow. What does supremely matter is that every hose shall carry the water of life that the Christ brought into the world and offered freely to men.

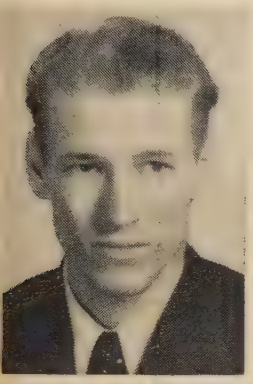
Lent is a season when brotherhood is emphasized. Brotherhood Week, February 18-25, should be observed in one way or another in every church. The two sermons that follow are suggestive approaches for the preacher. John Swint Hurt is the Southern Baptist pastor at Jonesboro, Louisiana.

Overturning Some Tables in the South

By John Swint Hurt

. . . and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves. Mark 11:15

SEVERAL years ago there appeared a cover on *motive* magazine which evoked considerable discussion. It was a picture of Jesus as a beardless young man of sturdy physique, standing alone on a wind-swept hill. In the background the skies were ominous with a gathering storm. As a forewarning the winds were ruffling his hair and clothes.



To me the picture was compelling. Turning to a friend I asked, "What do you think of this picture of Jesus?" He examined it critically for a moment and then retorted, "It's repulsive! Jesus was no wind-blown revolutionist!"

After mulling over this reply for several years I have arrived at the conclusion that a revolutionist is precisely what Jesus was. Let me hasten to explain, lest I be investigated by the Un-American Activities Committee. Of course, Jesus was no revolutionist from the Marxist standpoint. He was a revolutionist in that he believed in effecting immediate changes in his society. Had he waited for worthwhile changes to come of their own accord we would refer to him as an "evolutionist." Jesus was far too intelligent to believe that the vast social ills of his day would right themselves without the aid of decisive human action.

Revolutionary Action

One of the most revolutionary acts of Jesus' ministry was the overturning of the tables in the temple. There were those who were using the temple as a place for commercialization and even graft. Jesus noted that the house of worship had become a "den of thieves." Singlehanded he routed the money-changers and merchants, spilling their tables and merchandise out of the temple.

These tables and many more did Jesus of Nazareth overturn in the society of his day. He lashed out against the bitter racial prejudices of his time. He lifted womanhood from poverty of spirit and slavery toward the noble elevation which it enjoys today in the Western world. He spoke sternly against the religious hierarchy which was keeping the people in the fetters of superstition and ignorance.

Which tables would he overturn were he alive today and in the southern U. S. A.? The New Testament tells us so much concerning Jesus that we can safely guess his reactions and attitudes to much of our economics and politics and social ills. Leaving Jesus in the ashes of history is the usual thing. Letting him live and respond to the contemporary scene is the vital need of the hour.

The Ku Klux Klan

Ku Klux Klan—the words were formed from the sounds made in the cocking of an old model U. S. army rifle. During the grim days following the War Between the States, the Ku Klux Klan offered a spark of hope for an impoverished and exploited south caught in the brutal grip of economic strangulation and overrun by carpetbaggers. The Klan served a useful purpose. It drove away the carpetbaggers and salvaged a sense of dignity from the dust of defeat and the agonies of a merciless and useless reconstruction period.

The historical Ku Klux Klan is nonexistent today. Its purposes were confined to an era. Those who now masquerade under its name have so debased it that it has become an affront to the Christian conscience. It is today a brotherhood of blackguards who cower behind masks as they sabotage human rights. Theirs is crime and violence and cowardice.

The Klan is a pathological attempt at solving certain of our sectional problems. Its abortive efforts have made it one of our most shameful problems. It is an unconstitutional attempt at maintaining rigid religious and racial barriers in a world where such barriers are rapidly being overcome.

Little wonder, as the nation's newspapers carry stories of the atrocities committed by the Klan, that the ire of the nation has been aroused. So long as our society has such malignant sores, we must plead guilty to the charge of barbarism.

It is not enough, however, to be supine in the face of such guilt. As a brotherhood of progressives, we must aid in a cultural house-cleaning. The Klan must go. Every ethic in the New Testament cries out against it. It is a table which must be overturned!

We in the south are partly blinded by a strong and stubborn sectionalism. In some instances we are southerners before we are Americans. In many instances we are southerners before we are

Christians. Sectionalism distorts the Christian message. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." He did not say, "Go ye therefore into all the south and teach every white."

Blinded by Sectionalism

There are several factors supporting our strong feelings of sectionalism. Much of this attitude is due to an inferiority complex. Economically the south is comparatively poor. As a result, we have experienced cultural lags in important fields such as certain aspects in education, industrial relations and religion.

Tradition is another factor which keeps alive sectionalism. It is a factor which has always hobbled the progress of the south. Our one-party system, for example, has been part of the tradition. But powerful political and financial groups are using this system as a camouflage. Everywhere the drums of tradition are echoing and re-echoing the words "state's rights." It is unfortunate that many who are seeking to enforce the economic, political or racial status quo in the south masquerade under the slogan "state's rights." Many of us believe in state's rights, but certainly not at the price of human rights.

Progress, not tradition, needs to be our keynote. On a certain college campus there are two statues. One depicts a man bound and fettered in great chains. He is obviously straining against them, but to no avail. Underneath this pathetic figure is written one word, "Tradition." On the far side of the campus is the statue of another man, unfettered and running swiftly with the wind. Underneath the runner is the word "Progress."

We cannot afford to stand wistfully gazing into our past, for there is too much in our past which is to be deplored. It is one thing to dream of having lived as a large plantation owner; it is another thing to face reality and remember that had we lived then, we might have been "poor white trash" or even slaves. With the sharpening of the Christian conscience and the advance of industry and labor into the south our sectionalism is coming to an end. We must be alert against any disguised movements, political or otherwise, which would revive it. This table is not yet overturned, but as individuals and as groups we must keep straining until it is.

Racial Prejudices

There is no doubt but that Jesus' outspoken ideas concerning the racial problems of his day hastened his death. Examining the New Testament records of his teachings on this score, we find answers which are both universal and timeless.

Jesus did not evade the race problems of his own culture by pointing the finger of accusation at similar problems in other cultures. Several years ago when Walt Disney's "Song of the South" was shown in New Haven, Connecticut, an irate group of Yale divinity students picketed the theater on the grounds that the picture was discriminatory. On their way to the theater they passed several hotels and restaurants which refused Negro clientele. It seems almost ironical that in their haste to denounce southern folklore they should have failed to notice the cancers within their own culture.

Let us be careful lest we make the same mistake. It is not our business to tell New York how to overcome its discrimination against the Jew. New York must solve that problem. It is not our business to tell California how to overcome its discrimination against the Japanese. California must solve that problem. It is our business to eliminate discrimination against the southern Negro. Until we have overturned this table we have no right to take notice of any problems save our own. It remains for us to educate and to legislate, to teach and to preach, until this table is overturned and the south is a land of free men with equal opportunity for all.

If we will but allow the Galilean to live in our hearts, he will not let us rest until these tables are overturned. Through his power they can and will be overturned, and without coercion or violence. Where bigotry and prejudice are concerned, Christ is a master revolutionist, but always a bloodless revolutionist. Herein lies a part of the genius of his greatness. Without him ours could well be a fearful future. With him the future will bring a more enlightened and productive southland.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

HOWARD W. KING, Christian, Philadelphia, Pa. "The Challenge of Crowds." Mt. 9:36-37—. . . *when he saw the multitudes . . . Then saith he unto his disciples, . . . Pray ye . . . the Lord of the harvest that he send forth labourers into his harvest.*

FREDERICK A. MEYER, Congregational, Rockville Centre, N. Y. "Are We Ready for Christ?" Luke 1:17—*To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

JAMES H. CARTER, Lower Providence Baptist, Collegeville, Pa. "The Fifth Freedom." John 8:32—*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

ARCHIE E. ACEY, Monumental Methodist, Portsmouth, Va. "As Others See Us." Acts 3:4—*Look on us.*

J. RUSSELL BUTCHER, First Presbyterian, Hagerstown, Md. "The Priority of Faith." Romans 1:17—*He who through faith is righteous shall live.*

ROBERT F. LOSS, JR., New Castle, Del., "Transformed By His Touch." Mark 12:15—*Bring me a penny, that I may see it.*

LUCIUS MILES TOBIN, Providence Baptist, Atlanta, Ga. "God Is Shaking Things." Ezekial 38:19—*In that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel.*

By James H. Link

How to Like the Hard-to-Like

If you like only your own kind, what is so special about that? Luke 6:32.

JESUS' ethic is assuredly the most difficult ever propounded. "If you love only those who love you or if you salute only your friends," he asks, "what is so special about that?" More positively he enjoins, "Pray for those who persecute you." Can we follow this high ethic? Can we like everybody? Just how possible is it to like the hard-to-like?

I

There are those who say we should not even try to follow Jesus' injunction. Dr. David Slight, a psychiatrist of Chicago, has said quite flatly that we fall prey to ulcers, colitis and high blood pressure because we attempt to be too nice and too agreeable. He advises that we should pound the table more, get wrought up more often and throw ourselves around on occasion, to relieve these inner tensions. Quite specifically, he asserts that only two groups in our society still have the opportunity to do this—preachers and labor leaders! All of us, he feels, ought to have more opportunity to relieve our pent-up aggressions and get rambunctious and noisy in the process.

Most of us, however, assent, at least verbally, that we ought to follow Jesus' ethic. Consequently we are vitally concerned here, because we all find it hard to like some people. I find it, for example, particularly trying to like the oh-so-good, mealy-mouthed kind of piety which assumes it has never done ill. In this connection, I recall a lay preacher in Brooklyn who used to spend the entire sermon time smoking a cigar on the church steps but always joined me in the entry to greet all the congregation as they left. He would pump hands and say, "Wonderful sermon the pastor had, wasn't it?"

Yet we never feel quite right when we do not like someone. Our consciences are uneasy when we hate anyone, even with well rationalized reasons. "If you love God, love your brother also" disturbs us. We Christians feel a compulsion to learn to love the unlovely. We never forget the nail-torn God, that sad, wracked man arched in pain on the cross, calling, "Father, forgive" as he pressed toward the stars.

II

Admitting this emotional ambivalence, just why do we not like some people? Charles Lamb may have rejoiced in the old rhyme:

> I do not like you, Doctor Fell.
> The reason why I cannot tell,
> But this I know and know right well,
> I do not like you, Dr. Fell.

We, however, want to know why we dislike some people. And we need to know why if we are to grapple with this issue. In the first place, do we react negatively just because they are different from us? "They" read from right to left, or wear white for mourning, or eat queer foods. "They" don't talk about the same things we do and act dumb about things we know.

Protestant clergymen, for example, arguing over transubstantiation or intercommunion, who never heard "A Bushel and a Peck." We laugh at their self-important debate and secretly despise them. Or we laugh at clothes and manners—the black garb and shovel hat of the orthodox Jew, the flowing habit of the Catholic nun—and secretly despise them too. This is true among the animals—the lame tiger is abused, the queer chicken is pecked. The odd child is asked, "Well, where did you come from?" So we dislike people who are different and thus give the normal animal reaction of insecurity.

Then do we dislike because we think we know all about them by a few things "they" say or do? We seem to be very certain that there are no Jewish farmers, no Italians except vegetable-men and cobblers, and no Norwegians except "squareheads." Examining our folkways, it seems plain we are sure there are no Scots except the penurious, no Germans except the stubborn, no Irish except the untidy, and no Negroes except the shiftless. So it is that some people are disliked because we stereotype them. What a wonderful supply of ready-made, fully gummed labels we have for slapping on people!

Or again, do we perchance dislike some persons because they seem self-important? Too often we do not understand that the apparent conceit which repels us covers up a basic uncertainty in the

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other; or the noisiness hides a lack of ease; or the putting on of an act bolsters morale. Would we could realize that the boastful person is often basically lonely, and the selfish person needs a sympathetic friend, and the self-important one seeks understanding.

Perhaps we find the answer to the question why we dislike in that we are afraid they are better than we. We may feel that these others are wealthier or more successful. We may believe that they have an easier lot or that their ancestors lived here on Staten island before the Revolution. So we try to overcome these feelings of inferiority by tearing them down. We make fun of them, we express hatred or dislike, and so bolster our own self-importance. Pretty small trick! Pretty pitiable creatures, to be deceived by their own device!

Or do we dislike because we pay more attention to how "they" treat us than to how we treat them? Is it because we are satisfied just to take a cue from their actions and never aggressively win them? Are we just reactors in this business of human relations? Looking at the reasons for dislike is not a happy experience or one to convince us of much except human frailty. To dislike because another seems finer or because we have thrown him in a stereotype, because another seems self-important or because we are afraid he is better, because we react first with condescension so as to immunize ourselves to his possible snub—this is to be of the earth earthy.

III

Too many sermons deal in moral injunctions, telling us we ought to love our enemies, why God expects it or how the world needs it. Too few sermons deal with the "how" of human relations. How can we like the hard-to-like? Given a desire to follow Jesus' ethic, given a longing to be freed of silly little protective devices, how do we go about it?

"Practice liking other people. Practice liking particular people. It will be a splendid exercise for you to pick out someone in your neighborhood whom you never did like especially, and make yourself like him." Now, not a preacher but a psychologist said that. In the first place, therefore, we need to do something for the unliked one. Many of you here this morning remember old Edwin Markham as he walked our streets, and heard him gleefully thunder out his quatrain,

> He drew a circle that shut me out—
> Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
> But Love and I had the wit to win:
> We drew a circle that took him in!

We can well use this combination of wit and love to control our emotions and channel them. Generally, it can be said that we laugh when we are glad, and run when we are frightened, and grind our teeth when we are angry. But the reverse is equally true—that we can be glad because we laugh, and can become frightened because we run, or get angry when we snarl. The miracle of human relations follows this latter law—deliberately do something kind and thoughtful for the unloved person, and before long you will discover you do like certain qualities in him!

Second, put yourself in the other's skin. Use your imagination to see yourself in the disliked one's place. Say to yourself, for example, "How would I feel if my skin were yellow and I was stared at?" or "How would I feel if my mate were an invalid and everyone commiserated me all the time?" Or "if I were divorced and everyone pitied me?" Or "if my leg were twisted and people gawked?" Or "if my children lacked clothes and the pretty things on the counter tempted me?" Learning to make allowances is perhaps the first skill in the art of liking the hard-to-like.

We church people, particularly, need this skill. You know well how supercritical we can be. Our standards are so high; we find it so easy to see the splinter in our friends' eye and ignore the plank in our own. We fail so regularly in looking below the surface to discover whether this noisy young man ever had anyone to teach him better manners, whether this preposterously inflated woman is lonely and sick at heart, whether this boastful man is covering his inferiority. Yes, "to understand is to forgive."

Then in the third place, we need to study consciously the reasons for our dislikes. To know in general the little traps which catch us in ill feeling is not enough. We need to analyze carefully our feelings toward the hated one, asking, "Do I dislike him because I feel he dislikes me?" "Am I afraid to venture out on a limb and smile, or speak first, or extend the hand?" "Have I done anything to make the unliked one like me?"

Finally, we should practice looking for some good in everyone. The Bible is our oldest psychology book; we know little in human relations that is not there suggested. Romans 12:14 suggests, "Bless those who make a practice of persecuting you . . . rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep . . . keep in harmony . . . never pay back evil for evil." As we play together, work together, laugh with one another, we come to understand. Philippians 2:3 enjoins us to be "humbly considering each other the better." What a fine spiritual exercise we neglect in not looking at our own shortcomings.

An old Chinese woman, in reading her New Testament, used the methods of reading a new verse each morning and living it for a full day. All went well until the fifth chapter of Matthew. There she was stuck. The verse on loving her enemies took three weeks to accomplish, for a neighbor had burned her crops in spite. She was engaging in her devotional life not just to achieve a fine warm emotional glow, as do all too many, but to discover the laws of right religious adjustments.

I have hinted at but really ignored our fundamental failure in learning to like the hard-to-like. You may have gathered a clue from my tone. I referred to the "they" whom we set apart for one reason or the other. Our fundamental failure is getting our pronouns confused and forgetting the "we" of life.

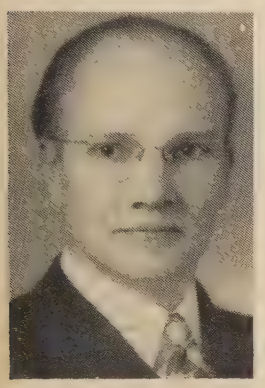
Humility is the appropriate emphasis for Ash Wednesday services, even if no foreheads are smudged with ashes in your church. George E. Drew suggests that most people don't like to think of themselves as average. Dr. Drew is now minister of the Congregational Church, Lakewood, Ohio.

Can You Stand Being an Average Person

By George Elbert Drew

For the man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.—Luke 12:15.

AT Harvard University some years ago, there was to be a twenty-five-year reunion of a graduating class. The class historian sent a questionnaire to all the members covering their life stories. From these he wrote a composite life story which went something like this: "I rushed out of college ready to conquer the world. I was sure that, being a Harvard graduate, I would soon be at the top in both society and business. But as the years went by, I came to realize that I wasn't going to attain the heights I had dreamed of. I came to realize that I was an average person after all. Life wasn't as glamorous as I thought it was going to be. It had more struggle and disillusionment and disappointment than I ever expected."



I wonder if this isn't the experience of practically everybody. When you go to a symphony concert and see the hundred or so players of the different instruments, you see one hundred disappointed men, every one of whom once had dreams of being a great virtuoso (except maybe the bass-fiddle players, or the kettle-drummer, or the chap who tinkles on the little triangle so intently, which you can't hear anyway). And millions of people along every street in America once had dreams of becoming financial wizards or industrial tycoons, or at least one of the leaders in their fields.

I

America has been built on the doctrine of success, the office-boy-to-president idea, the Horatio Alger rags-to-riches dream, the worship of bigness. Ronald Bridges, the religious radio man, once called this feeling "Horatio Nostalger." I hope I won't be thought of as lacking in loyalty to the American dream when I take some exception to this standard philosophy of success and bigness. I think the philosophy was valid when America was immature and growing. The stories of Henry Ford and Thomas Edison, of Edward Bok and Abraham Lincoln are all good, and we all know people who went from nothing to everything on their own energy and ingenuity. But the country is leveling off now. Out of 10,000 men who think they are going to be president of the firm some day, 9,999 are going to end up in disappointment and frustration. While the American dream is a great stimulus, many are questioning whether it is worth the frustration and sadness and heartburn, and whether its drive should be replaced by something better.

The awakening to the hard truth that a person is only average is a terribly critical event. Many people can't stand it. They turn to some kind of escape from life, to drink, or to a complete cynicism about the world, blaming their trouble on others, or to a ruthless drive to attain success by foul means, since they haven't been able to attain it by fair. But almost everyone is an average person. That is what "average" means. People must adjust to it. And it ought to be a wholesome and joyful adjustment, rather than a hard and cheerless one. How can we find this wholesome adjustment?

II

First, we ought to dispel some illusions. Most of us think we are nearer average than we really are. We concentrate on the people who are ahead of us up the ladder, and forget how many thousands are farther down the ladder than we are. In a sociology class at the University of Chicago, a professor asked his students to write down on an unsigned paper what they thought their family income was, and also how many people they thought received a larger income, and how many a smaller income. One group said their family received about $4,000 a year, and that about 50 per cent of Americans got more than that, and 50 per cent got less. Another group was in the $6,000 bracket, and thought 50 per cent received more, and 50 per cent less. Still another group was in the $10,000 bracket, and they thought 40 per cent earned more, and 60 per cent less. They were amazed to discover that the national income at the time was $800 per family, and that actually only 5 per cent of people received more than their families, and 95 per cent less. Everyone has the illusion that he is average. In other things as well—in accomplishments, education, social and occupational standards, usually we are far from the center line of average. But because we envy others ahead of us, we have the illusion that we are average. It would be well if we got rid of this illusion.

A second illusion is that those who are higher

up the scale are so much happier than we are. This is a dismal mistake. For wealth and power never bring the happiness we think they do. Happiness depends upon mutual respect and friends, family solidarity and good health, a wholesome outlook on life and freedom from fear, a sense of usefulness and a solid religious foundation. These are not won by what the world calls success. Maybe the office boy who became president had a peculiar kind of genius which makes everyone hate him. He might be an intolerable bore on any subject except business. He might be so wrapped up in his business that he is a dismal failure in his home life, and therefore desperately unhappy. His very drive may be a cover-up of a sense of insecurity and inferiority.

You drive past beautiful houses at night, and see the lights from the windows shining out upon the snow, and you have the illusion that the people living there are completely happy. But perhaps they are mourning a son or daughter gone wrong, or some incurable sickness, or are fighting mad and won't talk to each other for days on end. It would be well for us to get rid of this illusion.

III

The factors which make for the true joys in life are not affected in the slightest by whether we are average or not. Among these factors let me mention two. For one, real joy comes from a sense of usefulness. It is good to be able to provide your family with educational advantages, comforts and conveniences, travel and entertainment. But these make no basic difference in the level of happiness. Real joy comes out of your conviction that what you do is useful to people, is contributing toward making people better and the world better, and that you are not just going along for the ride.

This must be what Jesus had in mind when he spoke about taking no thought for the morrow, what you shall eat or drink or put on. His statement is not very comforting to insurance salesmen or savings bank presidents or investment counselors. He meant that your financial standing is of secondary importance for happiness. Take it down from its first position.

When you are tossing on your pillow at night, it makes no difference whether you are sleeping on the most magnificent bed in the world, with silken sheets and the best of down comforters, or on straw. What counts then is the peace in your heart and the ease of your conscience.

Apparently we can't shake free from the pressure to fight our way up the financial ladder, to burn ourselves out because we are average and don't want to be average, unless we can find a religious point of view. Only this can help us see things from a wiser outlook than the keeping-up-with-the-Joneses philosophy. Only the religious person can do this, and therefore only the religious person can find the real joys of life.

Also basic to deep-down joy in life is your solidarity with your family and friends. Is this changed by whether or not you are an average person? It is not. Of course there is a level of subsistence below which there is nothing but misery. One of the great needs in our world of plenty is to eliminate poverty. But except for getting below that level, no difference is made by your place on the financial ladder. Indeed it can be argued that being too far up the scale endangers good family and home life. But home life is where happiness is determined, and so it should be our first standard of value. No need for the nerve-shattering fight against being an average person. Again, this kind of joy can be found only through a religious view of life, because self-centeredness wrecks the joys of solidarity with family and friends, and people can outgrow self-centeredness only by seeing values beyond their narrow selves, by being able to back away from life regularly and see themselves in relation to others.

Everyone who finds this different standard of values can say: "By the standard of true joys, in that I am in a position to be useful to people, and can find solidarity with my family and my friends if I will, I am not average at all, but I am particularly blessed, and have far more happiness than I deserve. It is of no importance to me whether the world calls me average or not. The world is all wrong about this. I have found a higher measure of joy, and with the help of God, I'll measure my life by this standard, and help others to do the same."

A Snow Prayer

By Douglas Harwood

Pastor, Central Lowell Christian, Lowell, Massachusetts

WE praise thee, O Giver of good and perfect gifts, for the beauty of thy creation in which we live. It is our joy that here the great outlines of nature are unlimited by the constructions that man has made in which to live and work, that it is more as God has made it; and though we would not condemn the highways and the highwires that connect us with people and things, may we always be mindful of the gift of nature as God's creation.

We wake, O God of sunshine and snow, to the white wonder of winter. As the gift of the Child, it can come so quietly. May we learn the lessons of the snow—how, while we sleep, the brown earth in drab hibernation is covered with crystal beauty. From out of the sky, with no thanks to us, comes the blanket of loveliness. We pray for a new awareness of God's all-inclusive concern, a spiritual concern than can make over our drab lives into lives of beautifying service.

Hear us, O God, as we pray out of a sense of sin and shame; for we know the strength of the snow blizzard—how it may come with fury, like the punishment of a righteous God upon an unrighteous people. Hear us, O Father, when we pray for strength to sustain us against the storms of our time. Lead us out with what strength we

may possess to reopen the ways of worship of thee and the paths of brotherly connection with thy separated children on earth.

Now as we travel in snow-lined ways may we hear again the Master Teacher telling of the strait and narrow path which leads to life. What may have been short cuts across the fields and through the woods are gone, and we follow only the well traveled highway in the tracks of the plow. Teach us to know more fully the Master Plowman who has opened the road of life for us and for all men.

And yet in the ingenuity of man it is possible for us to spread our feet in snowshoes to travel where others would not or could not open the way. Let us then give rightful praise to the pioneer who, facing the improbable and impossible, yet made a way to go.

O Eternal God, who hast given us a time of earthly life and service, teach us that we, like the snow, are not here to stay. While here, we adjust ourselves to snow as we relate our desires to the community in which we live. As the white blanket promises a well watered garden for spring planting, so may our time upon the earth be a blessing in the planting of faith. Amen.

BIGGER AND BETTER VALENTINES

A Sermon for Children by Alvin D. Johnson

I HAVE several valentines to show you. Here is a tiny one, and here is one almost two feet long. If I were to ask how many of you sent valentines this week, you would all raise your hands. If I were to ask how many of you received valentines, I'm sure all hands would again be raised.

When you sent your valentines this week, you sent them to those you liked. You wanted those people to know that you liked them and that you thought enough of them to send this kind of remembrance. Maybe that is the reason valentines are in the form of hearts. It is a good feeling to know that you are someone's valentine.

But what has all this to do with bigger and better valentines? Can you see this picture in my hand? It's a picture of our church. And look, it fits right into this valentine. I hope that our valentine and our heart are large enough to care for all the families of our church. Is your valentine large enough and good enough to care for all in our church fellowship?

But let's look at another picture. Here is one of a little Negro boy. If we want to have him in our valentine, if we want to show him we care for him, this little valentine must be thrown away. We must get a bigger and better valentine. And here is just the one. This heart-valentine is large enough to take in our church fellowship and also this little fellow who represents millions of his brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers.

Now taking him into our valentine, or our heart, means that we are offering him all the opportunities we enjoy. It means a chance to live in good houses, to have an education, to read good books in libraries. It means a chance to become a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher. It means that we match his ability with the opportunity. It means that we are giving him the same love and concern that we give ourselves. Is your own valentine big enough for that? Ask mother and father how big our United States' valentine is.

And here is yet another picture. It is of a poor, hungry girl from Europe. And here's another of a whole hungry family of India. Our valentine certainly must be larger if we are to fit all these in also.

This two-foot valentine will take in all the pictures—the one of our church, the one of the Negro boy, the one of the hungry girl from Europe and even the picture of the whole family of India. I want each one of you to ask yourself, "How big is my valentine? Is it big enough to take in different nationalities, the poor and hungry, the sick and homeless?"

An even harder question is this, "How big should my valentine be?" I'll give you the answer to that question in a strange way—by asking you another question; and if you can answer this one correctly, you will be answering the first question right.

Here it is: If Jesus sent a valentine today, how big would it be? Big enough to take in our church? Big enough to take in our Negro brothers and sisters? Big enough to take in different nationalities, the poor and hungry, the sick and homeless?

How big should your valentine, your heart be? I think you know the answer.

ALVIN D. JOHNSON'S sermon for children combines the Valentine theme with that of brotherhood. It is particularly appropriate for lenten use. Mr. Johnson is pastor of First Baptist, Middletown, Conn.

A Prayer

O God, in a time when we are blundering, risking the remnants of our faith on things that do not save us, open our hearts to our Lord, that we may know him and knowing him love him, and loving him serve him.—*Orlo Choguill, First Presbyterian, Topeka, Kans.*

The blazing evidence of immortality is our dissatisfaction with any other solution.—*Emerson.*

Pulpit Post

The 'new' Pulpit

SIR: Permit me to be at least among the first 100 to congratulate you on the journalistic triumph represented in the January issue of The Pulpit. It has variety with dignity and "breathes" with personality. Surely it will be recognized, generally, as the indispensable journal for contemporary preachers.

I believe that reducing the length of the sermons is good, except for an occasional one that is of utterly irreducible quality.

University of Chicago. VIRGIL A. KRAFT,
Methodist Chaplain.

SIR: Hearty congratulations on the new format of The Pulpit!

WILLIAM E. GROTE.
Conference Superintendent.
Peoria (Ill.) District,
Evangelical United Brethren.

SIR: May the new format flourish!

First Congregational, ALFRED W. SWAN.
Madison, Wis.

SIR: My January copy came today and I read it through before putting it down. Without any thought of criticizing the magazine, for it has always been stimulating, I think it is now a more fit twin for the Christian Century. If the first month's paper is a fair sample, and I'm sure it is, then you can expect a yet more enthusiastic reading than ever before.

Methodist Church, C. H. HAMM.
Kinsley, Kans.

SIR: The best thing about the new Pulpit is not the improved printing and much improved appearance but the new 'faces' among the contributors. These young fellows give hope and new punch to us who have been out of the seminary twenty-five years or more.

Methodist Church, ALBERT E. TUCK.
Litchfield, Minn.

SIR: The January issue of The Pulpit hit me right between the eyes and right where I needed it. At first I did not recognize it, so radically different it seemed, but as I leafed through it, it became obvious that it was the same "man"—reborn. This is the first issue that I have read from cover to cover.

I am heartily in favor of every department you added. Each one seems aimed at a need I have felt every Sunday morning. The compilation has renewed my interest in bending more effort to make better sermons.

Again, let me endorse the new Pulpit one hundred per cent. It is more than I bargained for when I renewed my subscription.

First Church of the Brethren, DANIEL M. LONG.
Indianapolis, Ind.

SIR: I would like to congratulate the entire Pulpit staff on the new make-up. It is splendid!

First Methodist, WILLIAM M. HOLT.
Buenos Aires, Argentina.

SIR: It has been my glad and grateful privilege to read everything in every issue of The Pulpit thus far. And I intend to continue that pleasing and profitable experience as long as I can. In my judgment The Pulpit has been far in the lead of all preachers' magazines of which I have any knowledge. And now I congratulate you and myself that what has long been so good has begun to be decidedly better. I prophesy that all comments will be favorable.

Since you make it so clear that you welcome suggestions, I have three which could, I believe, make that better still and yet not require any additional pages.

1. Publish only one full-length sermon and all the others in the summary form. When I mentioned that to a brother minister recently, he said, "Yes, but let someone other than the preacher himself do the condensing." I agree.

2. Give not less than a full page to newly written poetry. It is a temptation to comment at length on the unfair treatment poetry gets in these times and the sad consequences. But I will not now yield.

3. Publish more newly written prayers; not devoting less than a full page to these, either.

Congregational Church, JOHN C. PRYOR.
Weeping Water, Neb.

SIR: My heartiest congratulations upon the new appearance of The Pulpit. It is very attractive indeed and I am delighted with it. I feel that the journal is meeting a real need in our present critical era.

EDWARD H. PRUDEN.
President, The American Baptist Convention.
First Baptist,
Washington, D.C.

SIR: You are on the right track with the new Pulpit. I always enjoy Dr. Morrison's editorials and am especially pleased with Dr. Enslin's column. The whole tone of the magazine is more mature. I shall look forward to the issues as they come along.

Grace Baptist, THOMAS E. ELLIS.
Belleville, N.J.

SIR: Allow me to express my sincere appreciation for the splendid new format of your magazine. The new features add a great deal to the practical value of the paper, especially the pungent book reviews and the stars or lack of stars.

May I second the motion for more expository sermons? We had a conference retreat recently where an outstanding clergyman presented two lectures, "The Importance of Expository Preaching" and "How to Preach Expository Sermons." His first presentation was a "wow." His second a "dud." You will be doing a great favor for us preachers by emphasizing the "how" of this great responsibility.

First E.U.B., DANIEL L. SHEARER.
Harrisburg, Pa.

SIR: I liked and was disturbed by your critical comment on sermonizing in "More Quantity than Quality" (Preachers in Print, January issue).

First Presbyterian, HAROLD J. DROWN.
Ottumwa, Iowa.

Pope: Pro and Con

SIR: Liston Pope was pretty rough on the would-be seminary student in his January article in The Pulpit. Under his classification many of our greatest preachers would be considered "lame ducks," including Dwight L. Moody and the late Oswald McCall of Berkeley. Some of us who have been through a "seminary" (I went to Pacific School of Religion) would like to put Dr. Pope under a microscope as he would like to do to the student. Is the pot calling the kettle black?

Bethany Congregational, WILLIAM I. NEWMAN.
Los Angeles, Calif.

SIR: I like your idea of being a minister's *Saturday Review of Literature,* and hope that you can achieve it.

Your lead article by Dean Pope was good, but a mis-

nomer—he spoke of the ministry, not of preaching. Of all branches of seminary education none is more antiquated and beaten up than homiletics.

I would like to suggest you have an article addressed to this special subject—since it is the purpose of your journal. I would like it in the tone of your book review on the shortage of preaching texts.

Fairfax Community, JAMES W. MONTGOMERY.
Fairfax, Calif.

SIR: Congratulations on the new Pulpit. I liked especially the opening article by Liston Pope and would appreciate similar stimulating articles by outstanding leaders of religious thought in succeeding issues.

Epworth Methodist, SIDNEY A. MAYER.
Toledo, Ohio.

To Date: One Protest

SIR: No, gentlemen, I don't like the feel nor the format of The Pulpit for January. It's like suddenly meeting a solid, friendly, plainly dressed next-door neighbor in a new outfit of oil-slicked hair, diamond pin in a flash cravat, spats, cane and all. Or maybe it seems more like a Sunday school paper.

But I'll still search the unfamiliar pages and find the goodness that I know must be there. It really doesn't matter to me, if the rest like it better.

Loveland, Ohio. E. PHILIP VOGEL.

Disagrees with Winn

SIR: I have just finished reading the November Pulpit from cover to cover. I agree with most of what Ralph H. Winn says in his letter to the editor. However, I take strong exception to his suggestion that "name preachers" be excluded. I think that your present policy in this matter should be continued.

Barton, Vt. THEODORE H. GREGG.

Keep Illustrations Factual

SIR: See the November Pulpit, p. 261: (a) can a rat gnaw through a copper tube? (b) since when has gasoline been kept in the rear of a plane? Our illustrations must be kept factual.

Community Methodist, CLARENCE R. WAGNER.
Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Advance Reformation Day

SIR: Apropos of your December "event of the month." Since November 1 is All Saints Day and November 2 is All Souls Day, can we not advance Reformation Day a couple of weeks? And who can do it better than The Pulpit?

Fullerton, Calif. GRAHAM HUNTER.

'The Mantle of Charity'

SIR: The sermon by Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones "The Mantle of Charity," October, 1950, was most certainly stimulating and much needed. However it brings to mind a problem which I cannot solve.

Certainly we must overlook faults and sins in people, as Dr. Jones well states in regard to Luther, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and so on. But if this is done without also pointing out the errors of their ways (though not condemning them), is such procedure good?

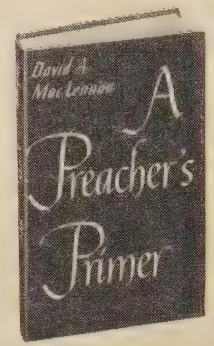
Consider the stern notes in Jesus' preaching, when his countenance strangely changed, when fire leaped from his piercing eyes, when his words lashed out with lightning thrusts and lay bare the hidden needs in the hearts of men. He openly, repeatedly, called the preachers and moralists "hypocrites," mere actors of a part, and told them to their faces that the crooks and harlots would get into heaven before they. He made a laughing stock of the disciplinarians by saying that they "strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel." He pointed out those who took pride in their moral standards by name and declared they were "sepulchres," without, beautiful; within, putrid!

Must we not be sure to use "the mantle of charity" at all times, yet neglect not also to employ courage in denouncing sin?

Hope Community (Reformed), DONALD K. BLACKIE.
Los Angeles, Calif.

A guide to more satisfying and effective preaching

A Preacher's Primer



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Yale Divinity School

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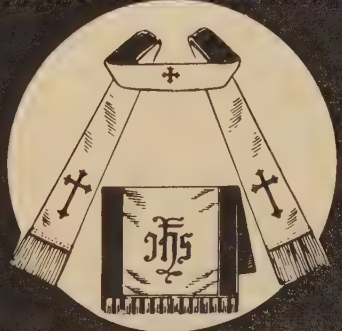

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Sermon Summaries

Christian Stewardship

For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.—Luke 12:12.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.—John 10:10.

CHRISTIAN stewardship includes possessions. In a world that refuses to believe the words of the text, how seriously do we as church people take our responsibilities for supporting the institution that alone can stamp out communism—the church? Your contributions are a negotiable form of your personality—your ability and energy. They make possible the work of your church. What is the call of Christian stewardship upon us with regard to our possessions and material resources?

We are called to get the values of life in proper perspective. We should see the various values of life in their right relationship. We are called to keep possessions in their place. They promise so much more than they can deliver. Wealth is a dominant consideration in our culture. The possessions of the soul are the ultimate values—faith, hope, love, beauty, truth, goodness.

We are called to make our money count for God. Stewardship involves not only the use of money but the spirit and method of its acquisition, investment and distribution. Money is your coined energy, your minted life. "You can't take it with you," and we are called to make it count for God here!

We are called to project ourselves into the work of the Kingdom. We are called to render 24-hour-a-day stewardship. We need to see the importance of the tithe—setting aside one-tenth of income for God's work—as a method of meeting the minimum financial requirements of a Christian. A systematic and proportionate giving of our money to the work of our church is the obligation of the Christian steward. How much will your negotiable personality contribute to building the Kingdom of God here and now?—*Hoover Rupert, First Methodist, Jackson, Mich.*

Why Did This Happen to Me?

WE'VE HEARD this question asked many times. Probably we've asked it ourselves in the midst of some unpleasant experience. We wonder why God often allows good people to suffer. Jesus was no stranger to our question, for he asked, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

If this question had been asked by either of the two criminals who were crucified with Jesus, the answer would be clear: "This happened to you because you are the kind of person to whom such things must be expected to happen. Your life has been lived in the wrong way and this is the outcome for you." This stern answer would need to be made to some people today. Perhaps the same answer would have to be made to some of us. If things never seem to work out right for us, we may need to change some attitude or habit.

Another answer, strange as it may sound, is that subconsciously you may have been wanting this thing to happen. You may be trying to punish yourself for something you've done of which you are ashamed. Our minds work in curious ways, so that without realizing it we ourselves are the cause of some of the unfortunate things that happen to us. The remedy is a better understanding of ourselves.

Many unpleasant things come upon us, however, not because of any fault within us but because we are a part of the total life-process. Consider four facts: God has placed us in a world that has its laws; it is a changing, developing world; there is the power of moral choice; there are the intermeshed relationships of life. How much human tragedy comes from these four conditions of life! Yet we couldn't conceive of life without them.

Why did this happen to me? Why do we always ask this question about unpleasant things and never about our opportunities and privileges, our health and happiness, the kindly providences that give us loved ones and friends?

'Tis then we should kneel before God above
And ask, "What have I done to deserve such love?
Who am I that I should be blessed
With such a full share of happiness?"

—*J. Francis F. Peak, First Baptist, Wildwood, N. J.*

Don't Ride Wild Horses

And Jesus said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.—Luke 9:23.

WHEN I was a youngster one of my playmates had a shetland pony. We used to have a lot of fun going out into the pasture where the pony was grazing, sneaking up on him, and then jumping on his back to see how long we could stay on without getting pitched or falling off. After we'd lost our seat, the pony usually stopped and waited for us to repeat the routine all over again. Fortunately the pony was neither vicious nor wild and none of us ever got hurt, but in retrospect it's not difficult to visualize what might have happened had the pony been less gentle.

There's an old adage that says that the Lord looks after fools and children—but I don't believe it would require much imagination on the part of any of us to see what might happen if one of us adults were to get into the paddock with a wild horse and attempt that same sort of stunt. And yet many of us in the daily routine of our living do as much or worse in the field of foolishness and folly.

So many of us go through life motivated by the foolish philosophy of "I'm going to do what I please however and whenever I feel like it." We'll follow a whim or our madness of the moment without restraint or reason, and when we get bucked off by the broncho of our own willfulness and folly, we pick up the pieces of our lives and gripe to both God and man about the dirt that life has dished out to us. Much of our living is of a piece with the experiences of the man who puts on his spurs but neglects to put the bridle on a wild horse, and then takes off.

I'm certain most of us will agree that in addition to the presence of an overdose of laziness in our lives, we also have within us conflicting and turbulent desires and drives and passions, which, if let loose without any restraint, would wreak havoc with our lives and plans. When we are alone with ourselves, even the best of us have at least tiny glimpses of little devils of desire and fledgling demons of destruction trying to get the upper hand and dominion over our personalities. The man who cannot keep these baser passions from leading him to his doom, who lets himself try to ride those wild horses unbridled and unchecked, who has no self-control or self-discipline—he is not the man most of us desire to emulate, we say; and yet how much effort do we expend to keep from following in his footsteps? It's easy enough to agree with the sage of the Old Testament who said, "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," but it takes more than words to make it a reality in our own lives.

By replacing the champing evils within by a routine of goodness, we can put a curb on the wild horses that would run away with us. In that struggle within every human soul, both for denial and for positive conquest, the eternal Christ stands ready to help and guide us if we will take seriously and unreservedly his invitation when he says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me."—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.*

To Keep the Soul Alive

ACCORDING to Moffatt's translation of Romans 12:11, the Apostle Paul, from a dirty old Roman jail, wrote to his fellow Christians, "Maintain the spiritual glow." By every right Paul had authority to speak. Shipwrecked, beaten with rods,

(*Continued on page 27*)

By Edwin Morgan

Grist for preachers' mills
By well known New York
Author and art critic

Christ in Modern Art

ARTISTS are, of course, no longer as preoccupied with religious themes as they once were, but the life and intentions of Christ have nevertheless challenged the talents of some of our most important moderns. And just as the "Christs" of the art of every era have reflected the temper of their times, modern treatment of him reflects modern confusion and despair, and also modern hope through some kind of social effort.

Despair is the dominant note in many of the representations of Christ since Delacroix. Delacroix's lovely wind-blown "Crucifixion" is one of the first important art expressions of the heavy feeling of betrayal and abandonment which fell upon society with the Congress of Vienna and the subsequent political and social reaction throughout Europe. Manet underlined this tragic sentiment in his powerful "Dead Christ with Angels," and Gauguin, with his terrible "Yellow Christ," added a note of wry contempt for the triumphant burghers. More recent attempts at representations of Christ, like those of Georges Rouault, Marc Chagall and Dietz Edzard, while sometimes suggesting hope in some sort of personal transcendentalism, succeed on the whole in doing nothing more than emphasize the defeat of Christian humanitarian principle since the First World War.

Positive and Hopeful Aspects

But other moderns have attempted to present Christ under more positive and hopeful aspects, to restate in the light of current social philosophy the unqualified humanity of the Gospels. Of course, this sort of treatment is not strictly new. Albrecht Dürer, influenced by the reforming spirit of his time, argued in much of his work, especially in his "Four Pillars of the Church," for a world governed simply by the moral and social sentiment of the Gospels. Rembrandt went even further. Just before his time, the "Christs" of art have been moving unmistakably away from all popular and human connection. Renaissance painters had made him simply material for beauty of expression, a subject by which they could display their supreme talents and charm their patrons. The beauty of Da Vinci's "Christs" is so predominantly sensible that all other associations with the figure are of necessity subordinated and forgotten.

Painters of the Counter-Reformation, like Carlo Dolci, in an effort, for the most part, to stem growing religious dissidence, made their conceptions so impossibly beautiful, languorous and sentimental that they became unacceptable either as a man or as divinity. The Flemings and Venetians restored something of divine dignity to their treatment, but removed Christ even further from generally human association. The Van Eycks represented him as *rex regum*, "King of Kings," handsome, with a hint of Byzantine sadness, and crowned, sceptered and robed with a grandeur commensurate with the wealth of the prosperous burghers of Antwerp.

Differing Concepts

But Rembrandt's conception in his "Pilgrims of Emmaus" is startlingly different, for example, from Titian's luxurious treatment of the same theme. In Titian's great painting, Christ returns to a feast served on rich plate, amid splendid hangings, and in the company of splendid people like Cardinal Ximenes and Charles V. In Rembrandt's picture, he returns to a bare dark room, to a table garnished only with bread and surrounded by common men. Under the liberalism tolerated in the Dutch republic, Rembrandt attempted to restore the simple, humane Christ of the Beatitudes.

Certain modern artists have not only tried to reaffirm, like Rembrandt, the spirit of the Gospels but to suggest some sort of social effort. The magnificent "Crucifixion" by George Bellows, full of powerful movement, is also full of powerful suggestion. One's ears are filled with the tremendous sound of a common and terrific agony. It is obvious in this painting that humanity is being forcibly deprived of a saving principle. The figures have none of the peacefulness of the "Crucifixion" by Perugino, in which the head of Christ droops gently, indeed smilingly, in death, against a background of motionless trees and pale quiet water. Perugino's confidence, based on Franciscan satisfaction with the creation and on Pauline certainty of another and better world, are gone in Bellows' work. They are gone, too, in Jean Béraud's resentful "Crucifixion," which takes place on the Butte Montmartre and in which bitter witnesses in modern dress shake their fists at the smoking chimneys of the industrial city below.

'Inexorable Questioner'

Square-jawed, level-eyed, displaying gravely in the large feet and hands the marks of sacrifice, Epstein's imposing bronze "The Risen Christ" is by no means the meek Savior of general conception, but an inexorable questioner, a stolid reminder. Peter Blume's drawing of a Christ manacled with jewels and hemmed in by swords is equally pregnant with questions as to the fate of the Christian principle in the modern world.

But Orozco has carried to its extreme this association of Christ with current social thinking. Orozco's fresco at the National Preparatory School in Mexico City, and his well known "Christ Militant" of the Dartmouth University panels, represent both his ideal of the Christian purpose and his impatience with its slow progress in modern society. In the Mexican fresco, a Franciscan lifts the leprous body of humanity for a new kiss of hope.

Last Important Word

But there is no more angry "Christ" in art than that of the Dartmouth panels, not even Michelangelo's great muscular and thundering figure of "The Last Judgment." Orozco's "Christ" strides in cold rage over the debris of the wrecked symbols of a decadent culture. In the stormy background are piled smashed tanks and discarded rifles and cannon. But what is most astounding is that this "Christ" has cut down his own cross. It lies on its side in the general wreckage. The suggestion of anger and force at last on the side of Christian principle is startlingly new and unmistakable. This "Christ" certainly expresses the formidable rage of which the meek are capable, and is so far the last important word said in art about our hope in Christianity.

EDWIN MORGAN is the author of Flower of Evil, a Life of Charles Baudelaire, *and numerous other books and articles on art. The* American Quarterly *recently published his critical appraisal entitled "American Art at Mid-Century."*

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

'He Just Stood Up and Talked'

EVERY now and then I am told in awe-struck whispers of the wonderful sermon that the awe-struck whisperer had recently heard. "And just think of it! He didn't use a single note. He just stood up and talked." I generally try to be polite on those occasions and to express mild interest, if not enthusiasm. Occasionally, unfortunately, I too had heard the sermon in question and in consequence was in partial agreement with my lay acquaintance. The preacher in question, I was convinced, had "just stood up and talked." Not infrequently in such postprandial conversations I have asked my enthusiastic reporter just what the sermon was about. But that is usually an unkind thing to do, for it so frequently seems to cramp his style and to lead him to see someone else whom he simply must speak to.

The point of this first paragraph is that there are still a lot of people in our pews who are suspicious of written sermons, just as, not too many years ago, they were suspicious of "man-made ministers." When a man was called to preach, God would put his message in his mouth—did not the Bible say so? When a man stands up and preaches without notes, he is speaking for God, or rather God is speaking through him. When he uses manuscript, he is simply giving his own ideas; God is left out of the performance.

All this seems to me very silly. The thing of importance, as I see it, is that the preacher should have something to say which is worth saying, that he should say it well, and that he should do it in the way which is easiest and most effective for him. Some men, I am told, find the pen an awful obstacle. Their writing simply will not come to life. But when they face an audience, they feel buoyed up, have what we used to call "liberty," find the materials over which they have worked in their studies suddenly becoming alive. Far be it from me to criticize them if this is really so. But it is very easy to confuse glibness with "liberty," shallow and platitudinous mouthings with divinely inspired pronouncements, and to omit entirely the hard and exacting work of preparation in the study, forgetful that this is an honest universe and that the old utterance is still true: *De nihilo nihil.*

Occasionally, especially when addressing a new audience, the unprepared sermon may go. It is a rare man who has been preaching any length of time who does not have some material which he can serve up on short order. But it simply can't be done week after week. And the evidence of this is everywhere to hand in the dull, prosy, uninspired and uninspiring sermons that every Sunday morning produces.

There is no easy cure-all for this problem. Some men simply can't preach. They may be very able and effective in other activities, but in the pulpit they are dead. But there are many others who could preach, but don't. The more I listen to sermons, the more convinced I am that more preparation and less wistful waiting for the touch of the divine fire at the moment of preaching would in many cases work miracles. Many sermons bear perfectly clear evidence of thought and insight; but the way they are served up is deadly. If the man had forced himself to write out in full detail what he planned to say, had scrutinized each sentence, had been merciless in his criticism of it, had asked himself what was the evidence for his pretty general and sweeping pronouncement, had clarified that bit of muddy and confused verbiage, had recast and rephrased this ambiguous remark, had blue-penciled fifty useless and sticky adjectives, had visualized his audience (a half-dozen folk of quite different outlooks and interests, vivid before the preacher's eye, are an amazingly effective aid in good sermon building) and had sought to phrase himself so that each of them would understand and see his point—if he had done this, there would be a mighty fair chance of his achieving something worth saying and worth the attention of his people.

Then what to do with it? For some, memorization is easy. They can go through their manuscript as an actor goes through his lines and soon commit it to memory. Some men do, and they are very effective, despite a somewhat far-off and glassy eye. For others this is the sheerest drudgery. They must spend far more time in the committing to memory than in the composition. For such, trying to learn the sermon by heart has long seemed to me utter folly. Surely it were better to put the brain sweat into the composition than into the mechanics of memorization. Take the manuscript

(*Continued on page 27*)

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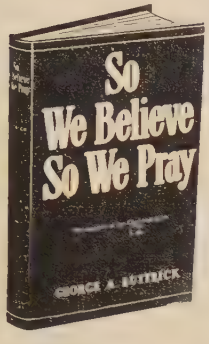

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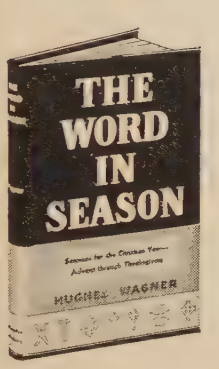

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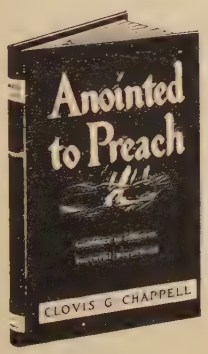

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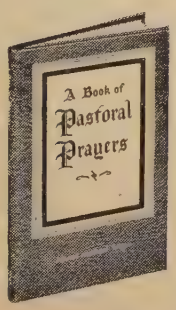
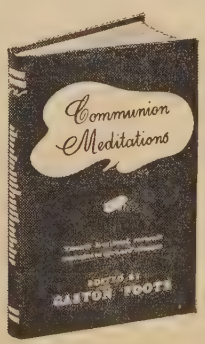
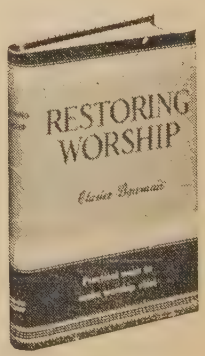






Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• Our Three Choices

IN ancient times, the man condemned to a term in the galleys had three choices. He could row, and most of the condemned did, as human machines. Or he could rebel; sometimes he did that and earned a lashing. Rarest of all, he could retain his human dignity even while serving as a galley slave.

All three of these choices are possible for us today. Like the galley slaves, most of us simply row, not as human beings but as cogs in a great machine. Although clothed with human flesh, we have become mechanisms responding to the tempo demanded by a busy world. Thus we have learned to push and scramble like the galley slaves, snatching and eagerly devouring our hard-earned rations.

Others rebel, and like the rebellious galley slave they are scourged and beaten. As the tempo of modern life accelerates, there is an increasing number who are scourged into physical and emotional exhaustion. The rebellious galley slave could stand only so much. He had to yield to the beating and become a cog in the machine or else forfeit his life. Almost every edition of a modern newspaper records another and another of the "modern galley slaves" who could not become a cog in the machine and has paid the forfeit from a high window or a bridge railing.—*R. Edward Dowdy, First Baptist, Washington, D. C.*

• Beyond Human Power

IN the story *Stars in My Crown,* young Doc Harris came to Walesburg a proud and self-sufficient medical man, yet a good man, too. He fell in love with Faith Samuels before the typhoid epidemic. Doc Harris claimed Grandpa carried the typhoid when he went on his rounds of pastoral calling. Faced with this evidence, Grandpa seemed broken until it was suggested that the typhoid must have come from the well in the schoolyard. Young Doc's pride suffered a blow when he realized he had falsely accused Grandpa. But when his beloved Faith Samuels came down with it herself, he sent for Grandpa. Said young Doc, "I've done all I can do and yet she is dying." Grandpa made young Doc go out while he prayed. The fever broke. Young Doc said to Grandpa: "Mr. Gray, I'm a practical man, I don't believe in miracles, but I do want to say something, somewhere, saved Faith tonight after I had given her up. I didn't save her, someone else did." Grandpa put his hand gently upon young Doc's shoulder and said, "Son, when you realize that, you're already halfway to glory." When we realize that God, through Christ, his present Spirit on earth, can enter somehow into our desperate situation, we're already halfway to glory.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

(We regret that last month's paragraph we inadvertently failed to identify "Grandpa" as a character in *Stars in My Crown,* a novel by J. D. Brown. THE EDITORS.)

Pulpit Calendar

Feb. 1—National Freedom Day.
Feb. 2—Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.
Feb. 4—Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 6-12—Boy Scout Week.
Feb. 7—Ash Wednesday.
Feb. 9—World Day of Prayer.
Feb. 11—First Sunday in Lent; Race Relations Day.
Feb. 12—Lincoln's Birthday.
Feb. 18—Second Sunday in Lent; Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 18-25—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 22—Washington's Birthday.
Feb. 25—Third Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 4—Fourth Sunday in Lent.
Mar. 11—Passion Sunday.
Mar. 18—Palm Sunday.
Mar. 18-24—Holy Week
Mar. 22—Maundy Thursday.
Mar. 23—Good Friday.
Mar. 24—Easter Eve.
Mar. 25—Easter.
Apr. 1—First Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 8—Second Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 15—Third Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 22—Fourth Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 29—Rural Life Sunday.
May 3—Ascension Day.
May 6—Sunday after Ascension.

SEASONS: Epiphany, Lent, Eastertide.

ALTAR COLORS: Epiphany, white; Lent, violet; Maundy Thursday, white; Good Friday, black; Easter Eve, bare or black; Easter and Eastertide, white.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

• 'I've Run Out Of Light'

NEARLY every American who was of newspaper-reading age during World War II remembers Ernie Pyle, the Boswell of G.I. Joe. In many ways Pyle's own story (*McCall's* magazine, May-Aug. 1950) is as absorbing as any of the columns he wrote. A strangely restless man he was, devoted to a wife who was a psychopathic alcoholic, intimately sensitive to the little things that are the daily routine of the little people who make up the world, winner of a Pulitzer prize. One nevertheless comes to the account of his death as the war correspondent in the south Pacific with the feeling that Ernie had never found a lasting satisfaction at any time. Despite his marvelously "human touch" he never saw anything of truly enduring significance in the human scene. Again and again we find such sentences in his private and public writings as these: "There is no sense to the struggle, but there is no choice but to struggle." "It seemed to me that living is futile and death the final indignity." "My wholly hopeless feeling about everything . . ." "I wish you would shine any of your light in my direction. God knows I've run out of light."

Maybe Pyle was all too typical of the first half of the 20th century, which his life almost spanned. Maybe we need less of the human touch. Maybe we need more of the divine touch. We don't run out of light when we follow Him who is the light of the world.—*Raymond E. Balcomb, Federated Church, Ashland, Mass.*

• The Power of Concentration

IN one of those buildings in Washington there is a pure glass lens three feet across. It is a gigantic burning glass. For when ordinary sunlight shines through it, the rays of heat are bent upon a focal point with a heat that one of the scientists described as able to go through the strongest steel with the ease that a hot needle goes through tissue paper. It's a parable of the power of ordinary forces when they are concentrated enough. All that we need is an ordinary mind that can be focused.—*Stephen C. Peabody, First Congregational, San Jose, Calif.*

• Carriers of 'Blister Rust'

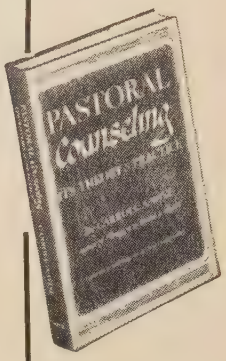
THIS past summer the government had a contingent of men at work in Yosemite park grubbing out currant and gooseberry bushes. These otherwise good plants have been discovered to be the carriers of the deadly "blister rust" to the valuable sugar pines. Here and there over the park can be seen twine stretching from trees to such bushes to trees—a guide to the grubbing crew.

One is reminded that there are human beings who are like currant and gooseberry bushes in this respect. They are carriers of "blister rust" in the form of gossip, prejudice, intolerance and selfishness. They cannot be grubbed out like bushes, though one wishes at times it were that easy; but through Christ these human carriers of "blister rust" can be transformed into carriers of life.—*Paul L. Sturges, First Baptist, Redlands, Calif.*

PASTORAL COUNSELING:

Its Theory and Practice

by Carroll A. Wise



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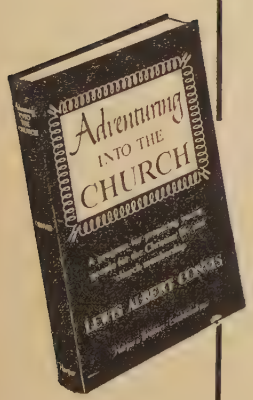

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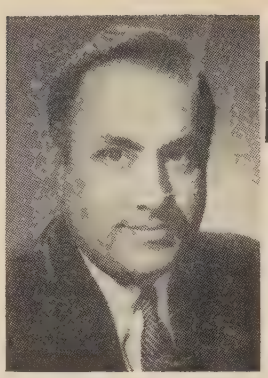


Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Church Architecture Presents Difficulties

IN the average church, the ushers are too far in front of the minister and the choir and organist too far behind him, to make intelligent contact possible. Turning over the details of church building to capable architects has brought many fortunate results, but it has surely raised new difficulties for the minister in his role as leader of worship.

Take the matter of the location of the organ console. In ninety-nine out of a hundred churches, the minister cannot speak to the organist during a service without a complicated system of lights and push buttons, or an elaborate inter-com system with speakers, microphones and shiny little switch boxes. Yet every service should allow for flexibility, and never be bound to lifeless rigidity. This flexibility enabled Dwight L. Moody to sense moods for singing and preaching. It inspired Ira D. Sankey to compose music for "The Ninety and Nine" when Moody requested a solo during a campaign in Scotland.

Even the most carefully prepared order of worship is not enough. There are times when the Spirit's presence or an absent-minded organist's overenthusiasm for the offertory calls for the addition of an unscheduled prayer or for the elimination of a previously chosen hymn. And here is our modern minister, all ready and eager to cope with the situation, hampered by a building which places the organist beyond shouting distance and the ushers beyond the reach of even a good Boy Scout semaphore signal. Picture the director of a symphony orchestra trying to create harmony and unity with the violins in the second balcony, the woodwinds and percussions in the orchestra seats, the brass section in the box seats, and the balance of the orchestra on the stage. This is a graphic parallel of today's minister trying to lead an orderly worship service.

The old one-room church back in the country sometimes gave the preachers a better chance to do his job than do some up-to-date church edifices. At least he could whisper to the organist without being overheard by the congregation and drop a hint to the choir without having to cry aloud beyond the vaulted Gothic arches. Oftentimes the organist and choir members are "standing in the need of prayer" as much as, or more than, the deacons, stewards, wardens and elders sitting with their families in the congregation. The growing bald spot on the back of the minister's head is the least inspiring part of his anatomy. Yet in most churches that is about all choir members ever see. How can they react except with bored indifference or open hostility! If ministers are to continue to lead in worship, it is time their assistants were placed where each can be reached with a nod, a glance or a slight motion of the hand.

And take church weddings. How often have complicated person-to-person relays been arranged through the long aisles (to say nothing about those huge oversized mirrors which disgrace many a choir loft). Even modern reproductions of Indian smoke signals are insufficient to let the organist know when the bride enters so that he can swing joyously into the wedding march. And at funerals, behind rows of flowers banked high about the platform, many an organist has literally torn his hair wondering when to modulate from "Beyond The Sunset" to "Rock of Ages," the entire proceedings being hid from his view.

How long are preachers going to endure this? Are they or the musicians to make the first public protest? In olden days the organ was in the balcony in the rear of the building. Today it is almost as far from the minister—in the peak of the cross at the opposite end of the church. And the poor preacher is where he has always been, as miserable about the whole thing as before. Bound by a printed bulletin, he is more a slave to tradition and the printed page than any of his pioneering predecessors. The choir director and the organist are likely to "raise the roof" if he deviates by one jot or tittle from the prescribed form before him. The food laws of Israel were no more binding on the sons of Abraham than are the set forms of worship on many a present-day preacher!

The committee on public worship, perhaps headed by the minister, should have more to say about the location of the choir loft and organ console in any new or renovated church structure than the building committee or even the music committee. Any architect who refuses to yield to the suggestions and requests of this committee should have his services dispensed with.

Sermon Summaries

(*Continued from page 20*)

stoned, left for dead, and now imprisoned for his faith, yet still exalted, surely he knew the secret of keeping the soul alive. Paul was simply writing to the early church that in Christianity one could be forever young.

Is there anything more important in our day than to maintain the spiritual glow and to know how to keep our soul alive? What a tragedy it is when people die spiritually before their life is lived out.

Jesus spent a major portion of his ministry telling people how to keep the soul alive. You cannot read the New Testament without recognizing the elements of life that Jesus pointed out as being able to rob an individual of life's spiritual glow. We call them the acids of modernity, secularism, materialism, but Jesus said people lost their soul through foolish living. In the well known story of the man who lost his heart of compassion through his overconcern with things, Jesus said, "This night thy soul . . ."

We keep our soul alive by the inspiration of the things we are alive to. It is quite enlightening to pick up the New Testament and read the life of Christ and jot down the things that he mentioned in his discourses, or that were spoken by his disciples, in which Jesus found joy. It may have been a wedding in Cana of Galilee, fishermen on blue, wave-washed Lake Galilee, friendship with the weary disciples, the beauty of the dawn or of the sunset—all seemed to minister to the responsive soul of the Christ.

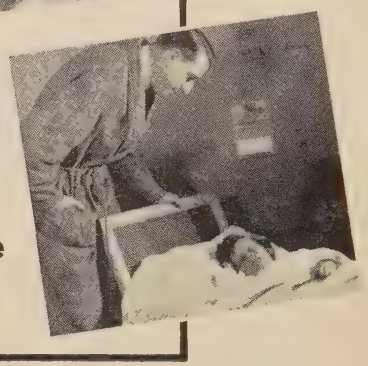
Jesus kept the soul alive through the love of God that lived within him.

He lived by doing the will of God, even though it led to a cross. God's will expressed through our lives will keep us also young.—*Frank A Court, St. Paul Methodist, Lincoln, Neb.*

Enslin

(*Continued from page 22*)

into the pulpit and use it without shame. But in heaven's name, don't bury your nose in it. Preaching from manuscript is not reading a cold and unfamiliar script. If you have really labored over it, have gone through it a half-dozen times after it was finished, each time with pen in hand, you should know it well enough that with it in front of you it is no barrier between you and your people. And make your sexton raise your pulpit desk high enough so that you can see it easily even with bifocals. Preach it without embarrassment or apology! Not only you but your people will at least have visual evdience that you have thought about what you were to say, have arranged it to the best of your power, and that there is an end in sight. Then, in the language of the inspired sage of the yesteryears: "Stand up, speak up, shut up."



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Preachers in Print

Spring Is in the Spirit

LENT is a time when preachers read. There are several reasons why. The great services of Palm Sunday and Easter lie ahead and every preacher wants—and is expected—to be at his best on those high days. He feels the need for intellectual and spiritual refreshment. Since September, his life has been a hectic one. Church and Sunday school reorganization, financial campaigns, denominational and civic responsibilities have demanded so much of his time and energy that little has been left for reading and reflection. He has preached out of the overflow, if any. He promises himself each year that Advent season will be different next year. But it never is. Programs and parties and preparations for bigger if not better Christmas celebrations crowd in upon him year after year. How can he lift up the Christ who is God when his people want a Christ who is Santa Claus? But by Ash Wednesday he has had time to recuperate from it all. Winter is passing and some days there are touches of spring in the air. And in the spirit. He knows all too well the deep spiritual needs of his people. He feels more than a little guilty that his duties as church executive have so overshadowed his preaching ministry. He resolves that the weeks ahead shall see first things put first; that step by step through Lent and Holy Week he will prepare himself and his people for the Easter experience.

IT is always easier to suggest books appropriate for Lenten reading for ministers and those of college-level intelligence in the congregation than for the run-of-the-mill parishioner. Two excellent books for the first group are ★★THE LIVING GOD by **Armand Pierhal** (Harper, $1.75) and ★★THE GOSPEL AND MODERN THOUGHT by **Alan Richardson** (Oxford, $2.00). M. Pierhal, a distinguished French writer, uses the classic form of a dialogue between himself and an educated unbeliever to discuss God's relationship to man through prayer. The chapters on faith healing are as provocative as they are likely to prove controversial. Pierhal describes himself not as a Roman Catholic writer, but as a Catholic who writes. In this volume, at least, he transcends sectarianism. Canon Richardson writes for people who think for themselves. Each chapter in the book, and especially the eighth, which deals with the salvation of man, is pregnant with sermon kernels. This is the kind of book preachers should put into the hands of thinking laymen and translate through sermons into words the man in the pew can understand. There is, also, a third book recently printed in English which should be read widely this Lent. It is ★THE QUIET WAY, a little book of selections from the letters of **Gerhart Tersteegen**, translated by **Emily Chisholm** (Philosophical Library, New York, $1.75). Written 200 years ago when Germany was depopulated and both physically and spiritually impoverished as the result of a long war, the letters are particularly applicable to our present times. The book has an effect at once heartwarming and soul-stirring. And it will be meaningful reading for university professors, salesmen, housewives and teen-agers alike.

FORTUNATELY the preacher is never dependent upon the currently published crop of books written especially for Lent. All too often these volumes are hastily written to order and are expected to sell more because they have "For Lenten Reading" on the jacket than because of what is between the covers. **Hubert C. Libbey's** ★★THE EIGHT DEADLIER SINS (Longmans, Green and Co., $1.00), "the Bishop of London's Lent Book," is a splendid exception. Ministers and parishioners alike will find occasion for some real soul-searching while reading its chapters on blindness of heart, pride, vainglory, hypocrisy, envy, hatred, malice and uncharitableness. The glorious thing about the little book (120 pp.) is that it does not leave the convicted sinner-reader in despair. Two chapters on "The Joy of God" and "The God of Hope" point the direction for any sinner in any Lent.

ROUNDUP

★THE MAN OF SORROWS. By **Albert T. W. Steinhauser.** Augsburg, $2.50. First published in 1925, this book of Lenten devotions is in no sense dated. It is what most people are looking for in such a volume. Unfortunately, it comes to grips with almost none of the critical social problems which face the church and society generally in Lent 1951.

THAT YE MAY BELIEVE. By **Peter H. Eldersveld.** Eerdmans (Grand Rapids, Mich.), $2.50. Eighteen messages by the radio minister of the Christian Reformed Church. Better listen to him a couple of times before you buy.

★IN GREEN PASTURES. Compiled by **Marjorie Barrows.** Halcyon House (Garden City, N. Y.), $2.00. In the final analysis the real test of what any reviewer thinks about any book is what he does with the volume after he reviews it. Miss Barrows' compilation will be found on this reviewer's bookshelf for a long time to come. It is one of the most enjoyable collections of inspirational poetry and prose ever got together.

A GOSPEL FOR THE SOCIAL AWAKENING. Selections from the writings of **Walter Rauschenbusch.** Compiled by **Benjamin E. Mays.** Association Press, $2.00. Any young minister—and there are many of them—whose seminary training omitted an introduction to Rauschenbusch should hasten to buy this little book. Even if he has to pawn a few tomes by Niebuhr, Barth and Brunner. There are numerous indications that the pendulum is swinging back. As *The Christian Century's* Simeon Stylites recently prophesied, Walter Rauschenbusch is in for a glorious resurrection.

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS.

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

January	This Month	An analysis based on reports from leading religious book sellers and from the reading of The Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers
1	1	**Here I Stand.** *Roland H. Bainton. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $4.75
2	2	**Life of Jesus.** *Edgar J. Goodspeed. Harper,* $3.00
3	3	**Mr. Jones Meet the Master.** *Peter Marshall. Revell,* $2.50
	4	**Chapters in a Life of St. Paul.** *John Knox. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.50
4	5	**Today Is Mine.** *Thomas Curtis Clark. Harper,* $1.50
	6	**Greatest Story Ever Told.** *Fulton Oursler. Doubleday,* $5.00
	7	**A Mighty Fortress.** *Ernest F. Tittle. Harper,* $2.50
7	8	**Start Where You Are.** *Arnold H. Lowe. Harper,* $2.00
5	9	**American Freedom and Catholic Power.** *Paul Blanshard. Beacon Press,* $3.50
8	10	**Basic Christian Ethics.** *Paul Ramsey. Scribner's,* $3.75

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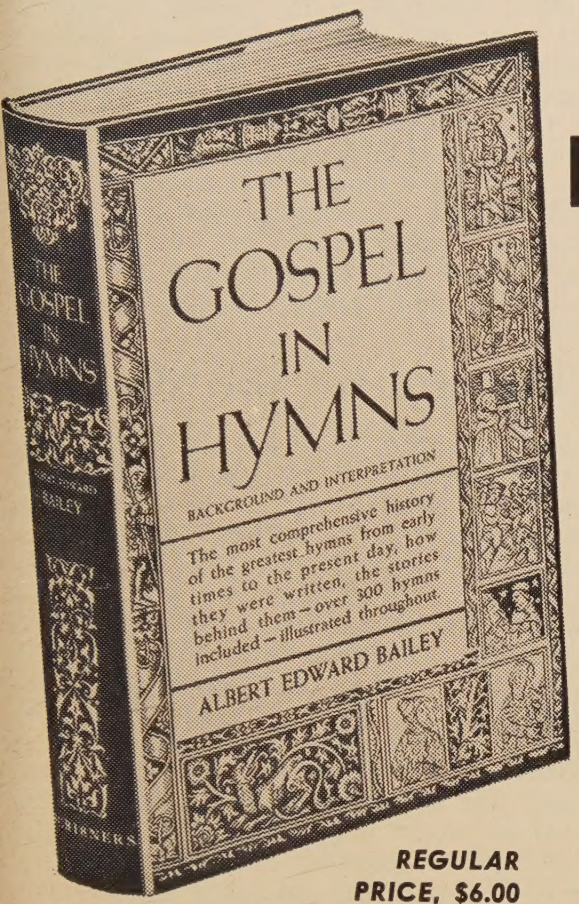
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The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE GREAT DEBATE is on! The issues are now clear. The opposition to our foreign policy has found two powerful voices in Mr. Hoover and Mr. Taft. President Truman has spoken in his "state of the union" message. The controlling concepts of the two sides, respectively, seem to be about as follows. 1. *The administration*: (a) Russia is awaiting the propitious moment to overrun western Europe and attack the U.S.A. (b) We have promised to aid the victims of this aggression; in self-defense as well as in honor we must keep this promise, as we did in Korea. (c) We must build up an army of 3 million and send 300,000 soldiers to Europe—this not only in preparation for actual conflict but to deter Russia from launching it. 2. *The opposition*: It is by no means proved that Russia intends to attack the U.S.A. (b) If she does so, our defense is in our naval and air forces, not in the ground troops we may send to Europe. (c) Our ground troops in Europe will not deter Russia nor assure the loyalty of our European allies, once fighting has begun. (d) Russia's present army of 3 million, backed by enormous reserves, would be irresistible on the Continent; American troops would face slaughter or Siberia. (e) The $75 billion full mobilization program of the administration would bleed our economy to the point of insolvency, which is what Stalin is waiting for. In this fateful debate, the odds at the present moment may seem to favor the administration whose policy has already attained powerful momentum by commitments, precedents, legislation and propaganda. An upsurge of public opinion may compel its substantial revision even before the 1952 election, when it is destined to be the paramount issue.

The Great Debate

The Book of the Month

THE BELIEF IN PROGRESS, *by John Baillie. Scribners, $2.75.*

WHEN I graduated from high school at the age of seventeen the subject of my "baccalaureate" speech was "The Progress of Civilization." I still have the original manuscript of that epoch-making oration in my own boyish handwriting. (Incidentally, the penmanship as compared to my present chirography would seem to deny the thesis of progress so bravely defended and documented!) During the early years of my ministry I preached many a sermon in which I maintained uncritically that the world was getting better and better and would continue to ascend upward and onward forever. Some twenty-five years ago I began to learn that progress is a highly complex concept and that one must be more discriminating in using it than I had been. I discovered that there had been many different ideas about progress in the history of human thought. And just now I have Dr. Baillie's new book which gathers up all these ideas, critically examines them, and comes to the conclusion that in the Christian faith we have a conception of the movement of terrestrial history which does not rob it of divine purpose and meaning, and a conception of the Christian revelation in which this meaning is consummated and fulfilled. Of all the books I have read on this theme, this is the most complete, enlightening and finely reasoned.

A Thought for the Month

WE PROTESTANTS should today be searching our hearts with this question: Have we given to Jesus Christ the kind of church that he deserves? He is the Head of the church and as his disciples we are one in him. But we have failed to honor him with a church through which he could manifest himself in the true dignity and power of his redemptive presence. In fact we have not given him a church at all. Instead, we have given him a multiplicity of "churches." None of these "churches" does he recognize as his own. And few if any of us would for a moment tolerate the claim that our denominational church is the Church of Christ. He did not found any of them. They are every one man-made. At their origin his body was broken—"by schism rent asunder." We may look back with historical charity upon those who shared in creating or forcing these schisms, but we should cease glorying in them. Certainly they should no longer be condoned, but in profound contrition for having accepted and tolerated them for so long, our hands and hearts should be set upon the task of reuniting these sectarian fragments of Christ's broken body. Those who look prayerfully forward to a great spiritual awakening in Protestantism—and who does not long for it?—may be sure that such a revival will not come to pass until we give back to Christ the church which he himself created and which his Lordship deserves. Why do the waves of high pressure revivalism (one of which we may now be experiencing) leave behind them a sense of disillusionment and futility? I believe one answer, and the major one, is that we have no church competent to conserve the fruits of these revivals. Their converts, like the Christ they have accepted, deserve a nobler church than our sectarianism offers them.

The Church that Christ Deserves

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

THE RECEPTION given the new Pulpit has far exceeded any dreams we had for it. Letters began pouring in the day after it hit the mails and continue to come in large numbers. In the first week of the new year, more than 416 preachers sent in their new subscriptions. And there has been almost unanimous agreement that this is the kind of journal the preachers of the English-speaking world have been waiting for.

New Subscribers

Frankly, it is a good thing for this managing editor that the subscriptions have begun to roll in. It can hardly have escaped any reader that the new format and contents cost a great deal more to produce than formerly. There is the fact that eight additional pages have been added, meaning greater costs for paper, typesetting and printing, not to mention the sad fact that our new weight costs more postage (which accounts for the fact I haven't dared look our good publisher in the eye for the past few days). All this notwithstanding, the Christian Century Foundation has increased the annual subscription by only 50 cents and has kept the combination price for the *Christian Century* and The Pulpit at the same old figure. If the blurb "a service publication" which our ad writers use when describing this magazine was merited in the past—and it was—it is even more correctly descriptive now.

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Can we continue to give you the new Pulpit at the present rates? We hope and believe so, unless unforeseen developments on the national level force our hand in the matter. And we will be able to do it even then if our board of sponsors—that's you; everyone of you—take a bit of the responsibility for the success of the venture. Do two things. First, tell your brother pastors about The Pulpit. Second, when you purchase an item you saw advertised in this journal, tell the advertiser you saw it in The Pulpit. Do those two things, send us the best sermons you preach, and we will do our best to make this a better magazine with every passing month.

Don't just send us a letter saying that you like the new format; tell us what additions or changes or increased emphases you would like to see made. Do you like longer sermons, shorter sermons, or a mixture? Do you want more sermon summaries or do condensations annoy you? Are the Pulpit Paragraphs pertinent? Do we give too much, too little or just the right space to Pulpit Post? And so on. We are serious when we say that you, the preachers, are the real editors for whom we serve as proxies.

G. E. H.

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Founded 1929

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